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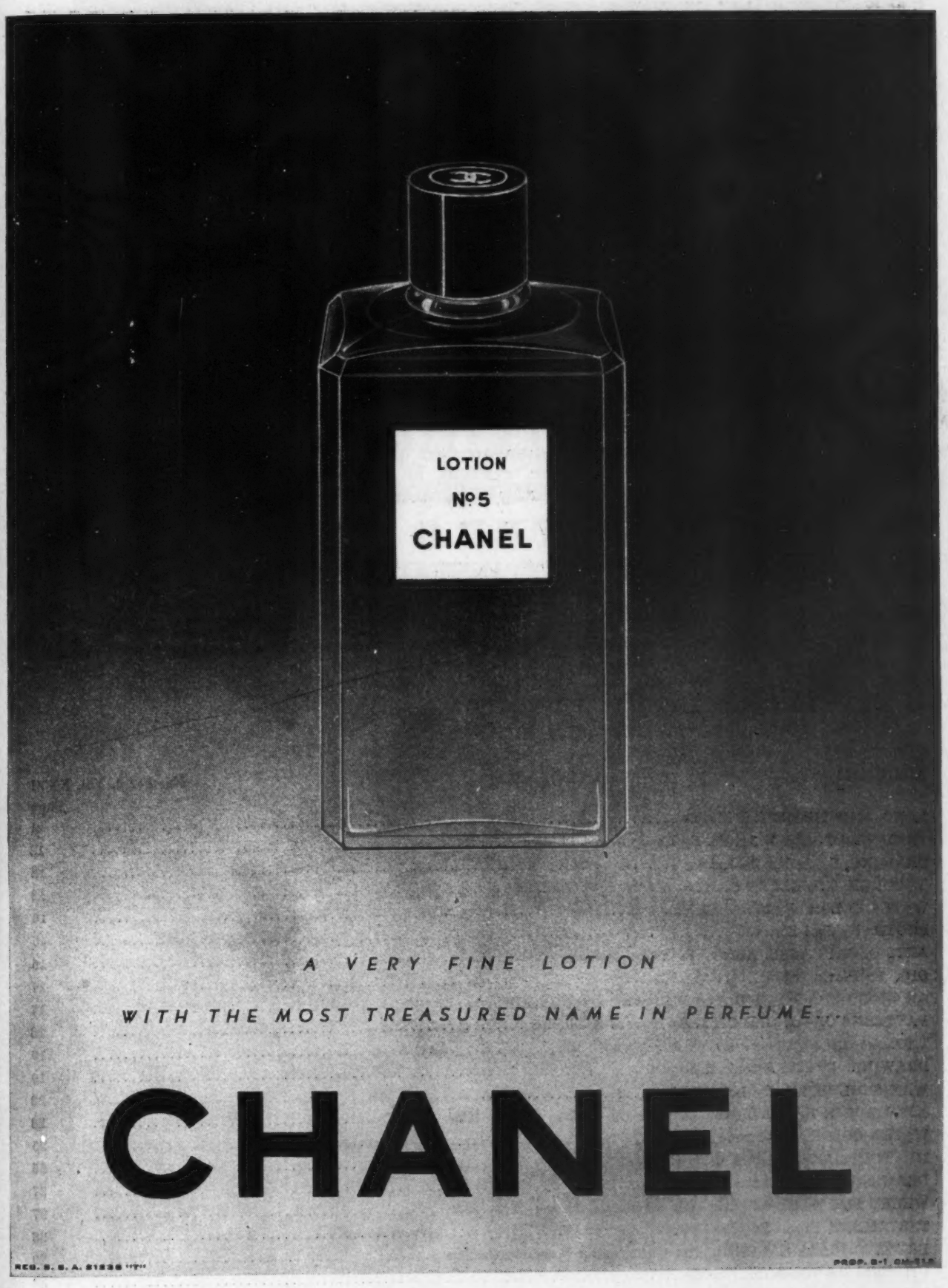
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Mexicos Monthly Review

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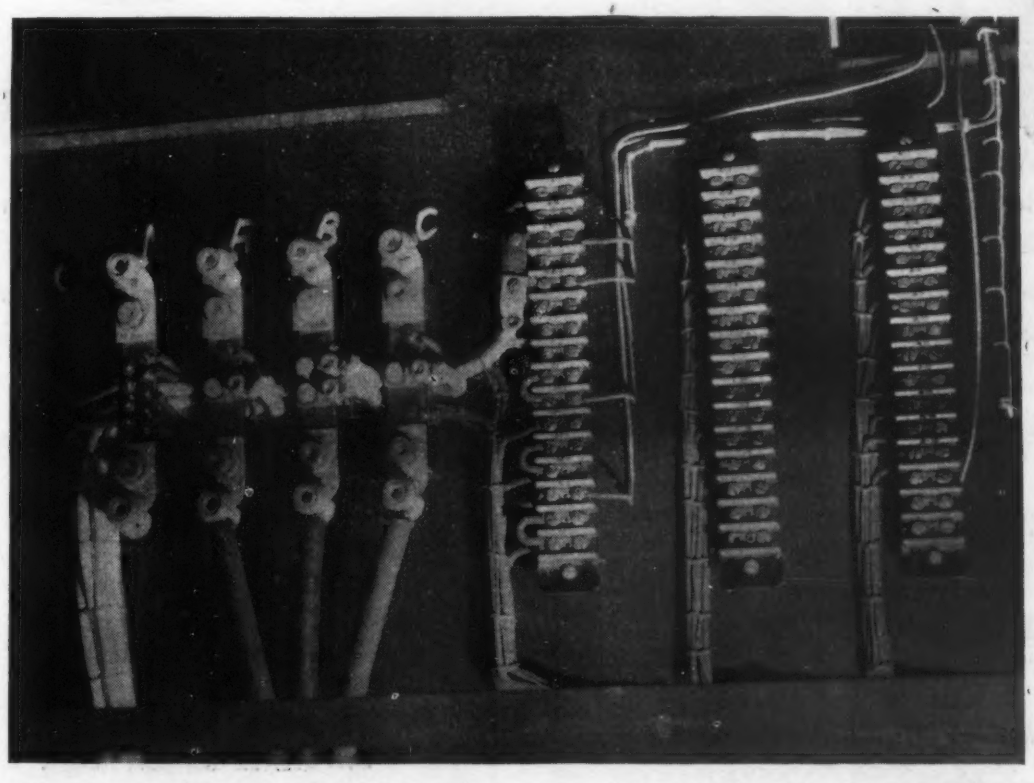
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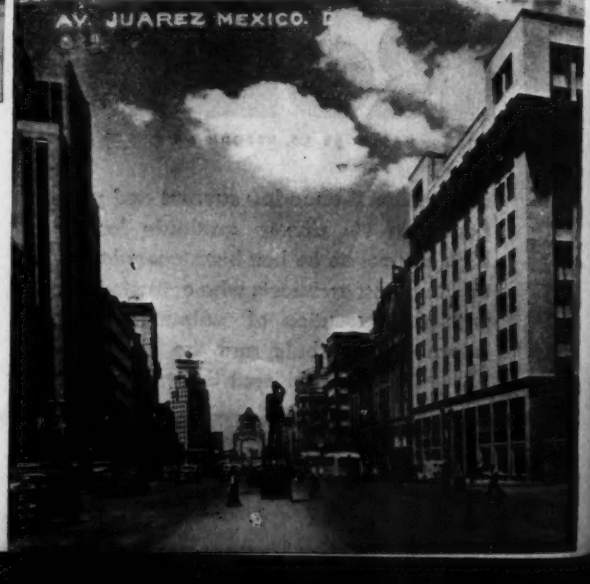
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Published on the first day of every month

Registrado como Articulo de 2a Clase el 22 de Octubre de 1927

Number 4 Volume XXVI
April 1st. 1950

HC WARD S. PHILLIPS
EDITOR

Land and Liberty

ON the 10th day of this month, Cuautla, in the State of Morelos, will witness the annual commemoration of the death of Emiliano Zapata. As during the past thirty years, the peasants of the surrounding country will gather on that day in an act of homage at the tomb of the man who launched the revolt against peonage and feudal land ownership, and thereby changed the course of the Mexican revolution from a purely political movement, defined in the slogan "Popular suffrage and no re-election," to a movement which under the slogan of "Land and Liberty" sought the goal of social and economic liberation of the men who tilled the nation's soil.

Emiliano Zapata, assassinated by his adversaries, succumbed in the struggle; but his cause lived on. The battle cry raised by an unschooled peasant served as the premise for the Article 27 of the Federal Constitution, destined to become the basic instrument in Mexico's social reconstruction. In altering the legal concept of private property, this Article rendered invalid the titles of lands that had originally belonged to peasant communities, of which they had been despoiled, and provided the lawful means of returning such lands to their rightful owners.

Zapata was the founder of the agrarian revolution and the State of Morelos its birth-place. Peonage, a by-product of the hacienda system, existed everywhere in Mexico, but its abuses were especially glaring in Morelos. In this small, sub-tropical state, once part of the domain which the King of Spain granted to Cortés along with some 25,000 vassals, sugar cane, introduced by Cortés, was the principal crop. In 1910, eighty-five per cent of the acreage was owned by twenty families. The bulk of the cane was used, not for sugar, but for the manufacture of alcohol, which became the state's main industry. The landholders, who squandered their fortunes abroad, exploited their peons and the lands they had grasped with the same blind ruthlessness. Forests were destroyed, towns and villages vanished within the expanding hacienda walls. And at the height of production, only three per cent of the total area held by the haciendas was under cultivation. The rest lay idle while corn had to be imported from other states.

Against these conditions Emiliano Zapata rose in armed revolt. The handful of men he led at the outset soon grew into an army of thousands, for everywhere the oppressed peons were ready to abandon the cane-fields and to join the conflict. Zapata was one of their own kind, and he spoke their language. The land, he said, belongs to the man who tills it, and man cannot be free unless he owns the land.

When Zapata's guerrilla bands finally gained control of Morelos and of several adjacent states, he stated his terms of peace in a proclamation which is known as the Plan of Ayala. Therein he made the following provisions:

"...be it known that the lands, woods and waters which have been usurped by hacendados through tyranny and venal justice, will be restored immediately to the pueblos or citizens who have the corresponding titles to such properties, of which they were despoiled through the bad faith of our oppressors. They shall maintain such possession at all costs through force of arms. The usurpers who think they have a right to said properties may present their claims before special tribunals to be established upon the triumph of the Revolution.

...The great majority of the Mexican pueblos and citizens own nothing more than the soil they stand upon and are suffering the horrors of a miserable existence without being able to improve their social situation or to devote themselves to industry or agriculture because of the monopoly by the few of the lands, woods, and waters. Therefore, such properties shall be expropriated, upon indemnification to the powerful owners of one-third of such monopolies, in order that the pueblos and citizens of Mexico may obtain ejidos, colonies, town sites, and tillable lands. Thus the lack of prosperity and welfare of the Mexicans may be remedied in all respects.

...The properties of these hacendados who may directly or indirectly oppose the present Plan shall be seized by the nation..."

Zapata's unyielding adherence to the above plan, his refusal to be bribed or coerced into compromise, and the appeal of his program to the landless masses compelled the federal government to enact agrarian reform measures in self-defense.

From its inception, the land reform encountered every possible kind of obstacle that a law can run up against in the process of being enforced. But throughout thirty years, each succeeding administration has done its share in enforcing this law, and today the intolerable situation against which Zapata rose in arms, wherein ninety per cent of the rural population had no land whatsoever, while a small minority owned or controlled almost all the land resources of the nation, has been thoroughly liquidated. Today nearly half of Mexico's total population lives on lands that have been provided by the agrarian reform.

And for this reason there is hardly a section of Mexico which does not have a town, or a school, or a street, or all three, named after Emiliano Zapata.

Friday in Toluca

By Henry Albert Phillips

THE market place of Toluca was reminiscent of the great market in Marakesh, Morocco, in full swing with ten thousand Arabs carrying on. On a Friday, there were equally as many Indians here. The green open space had a closed pavilion near the center and portales on one side and a double row of pulquerias, or vile rumholes dispensing pulque, mescal and tequila far beyond the point of sobriety. With no attempt at rectangles or straight lines, nevertheless the market was divided into sections confined to the sale of the same or similar merchandise. Thus every conceivable animal was sold on the hoof—pigs, sheep, turkeys, goats. At least one hundred donkeys were lined up within an enclosure; your pick at from six to ten dollars. The bazaar was composed of portable booths shaded with cheesecloth. We found a group of snickering Indian women around a booth filled with cheap modern corset girdles, which they were handling with modest wonderment, albeit a little shamefacedly. Fully half the Indios spoke only one of seven native languages of the surrounding tribes and often had to have Spanish interpreters. Women merchants were squatting all over the place, with their little piles of pitch fagots for starting fires and handmade fans to keep the fires going, and a good part of them nursing babies. Next door was the religious section, where garish chromos of Virgins and saints, St. Christophers for motorists, holly water basins and crucifixes and candles for every description, some five feet tall, were offered in profusion. Close by was the coffin shop, half filled with shoppers, in some cases bringing the old folks along to see what a nice funeral they soon intended to give them. Just beyond was the carnival spirit sweetly voiced by a couple of singers with guitars, singing popular songs copies of which they sold to the Indians at five centavos, who avidly bought them thinking that was all that was necessary, for not one of them could read.

In another ring of spectators was the ubiquitous medicine faker, expatiating on the healing virtues of a large bottle of liquid penacea and getting many a peso, although they could buy at the near-by herb booth, or native drugstore, real cures for a few centavos. In the guarache section a half dozen sandal shops were set up, one or more manufacturing them from worn-out tire shoes, that have practically replaced all other sandal materials because of their longevity.

We paused and patronized an old woman squatted on the ground with a great earthenware bowl of sudsy pulque before her, getting a tiny pitcherful out of it for ten centavos. My guide, who represented a hotel, began bargaining with another merchant for three hundred eggs, his entire stock, at the excellent price of eight centavos each. No. He would not sell the crate at any price. Very well, said my friend, you keep the crate and I'll put them in a basket. No, he would sell only half the crate. Why? Because, if he sold all, then he would have no more eggs. What would he do with himself then? Go crazy? Had he been waiting a week for this, to sell three hundred eggs at one time! He'd rather sell an egg at a time,

Continued on page 42



Drawing. By Arthur Zaidenberg.



Water Color. By Alfred C. Ybarra.

Through the Great Pampa

By Dana Lamb

WE sailed away from the hospitable little cove of Punta Flores early in the morning and reached Paredón at noon. Sight of the village from the lagoon was obscured by the lines of drying nets strung on poles set in the water. The nets are strung up by the returning fishermen before they beach their canoes, which simplifies handling. As we worked our way through the nets, we heard sounds of a great to-do on shore. Natives ran up and down on the beach; and several canoes, loaded with women and children dressed in their Sunday best, shoved off to meet us.

"What's going on here, amigos?" I asked, when the leading canoe drew near. "Are you having a fiesta?"

"No, Señor, it is because you are arriving. We have been waiting for you a long time."

"How did you know that we were coming?"

"One of our people heard of you in Tonala. He has a friend there, who is the son of Don Juan and Doña Facunda of la Ventosa."

We were certainly due for a warm welcome if Doña Facunda had press-agented our coming. As we approached the beach it became increasingly evident that she had done a good job of it. A marimba started playing in the little market place; and the crowd almost carried us, canoe and all, out of the water. The President, decked in his best, and surrounded by villagers, equally resplendent, read us an impressive speech of welcome. (He may not have read it, but he held a piece of paper in his hand.) Still in our old, dirty blue jeans, we felt a little self-conscious in the midst of all this elegance.

We thanked them for their fine reception, and settled the matter of whose guests we were going to be by a compromise; we would all dine together in the mercado. Here the women brought broiled fish, stacks of tortillas, and an array of ollas filled with beans, fried rice, and fish mole. We ate and talked to the tune of a marimba played by five young men.

After the banquet was over everyone was either sleepy or stupid from the copious draughts of native brew that had been passed round, and we prepared to leave. A shout of protest went up at this, but we were anxious to be on our way. Inquiries as to the best route to the nearest lagoon as usual, received, a dozen contradictory answers. Finally, two of the men said that they knew the passage, and were going there that night to hunt alligators. They invited us to go with them.

We gratefully accepted their offer; asked the President to sign our papers; said good-bye all the way round; and took our leave. It was like trying to break away from a party that has just started. Then followed the business of tactfully refusing the enormous amounts of food that they pressed upon us. But at last we left the village, with its hospitable and friendly people, to follow our guides across the pampa.

The boats in this district are called pangas. Like other native boats they are dugout canoes, but are propelled only by poles. The panga has a flat platform protruding over the stern on which the men stand to cast their nets, and while poling. The waters of the lagoon are so shallow that paddles would be useless—in fact the natives did not know what a paddle was, or how they were used.

At first the wind was too strong for us to leave

the protection of the lee shore. Later, when it quieted a bit, we hoisted sail and ran before it, after tossing a tow rope to our friends in the panga. This was a new experience for them, and they were exorbitantly pleased. These Indians, like pre-Columbian natives, knew nothing of the sail. This was the first time they had ever ridden in a boat not propelled by man power! As we raced along across the pampa, they shouted compliments on the speed of the canoe, and enjoyed themselves thoroughly. But when we reached water too shallow for sailing, our roles were reversed. They shot ahead, while we panted after them. We tried using our paddles as they used their poles, but in spite of our best efforts, the heavier dugout kept the lead. Finally they took pity on us. Since they had two poles, and we still had a long way to go, one of the men offered to change places with me. I climbed in the panga, while he took his place on the Vagabunda's stern. Then we did make time.

This was the first opportunity I had ever had to see our canoe in action. There was a real thrill in watching the graceful, speedy little boat cleave through the water. Soon Ginger and her gondolier shot round us, both of them smiling broadly at our progress in the heavier dugout. While the Vagabunda skimmed along, the fellow on the stern kept shouting, "Muy facil, muy facil." It was—for an expert.

But the lagoon soon grew too shallow to float even the Vagabunda, and we dragged the boats over a wide stretch of inch-deep water before we came to an almost concealed opening in the dense vegetation that walled the shore line. I went back to our canoe, and followed the natives along the deep, crooked, winding channel that tunnelled through the overhanging mangroves. We had reason to congratulate ourselves on our guides for without them we would never have found the passage; or, if we had found it, suspected that it led to any place in particular.

As we followed the natives in the gathering dusk, strange noises came from the great swamps on either side of the channel—the beating of wings, the hoarse croaking of birds seeking their roosts; the splashing of alligators wakening from their day-long torpor to begin their nightly quest for food. Creatures of the day hurried by, seeking safety and security for the long, dark hours. Creatures of the night emerged from their sunless, underwater caverns. Owls and bats began to reconnoitre. Crickets rasped and sang in unison against the contrapuntal booming of the deep-voiced frogs. Fireflies flashed their tiny beams so brightly that it looked like starshine on the water. Somewhere on the higher terrain a jaguar screamed. Night closed down; that swift dramatic black-out that terminates the brief twilight hour of the tropic day.

We paddled along in the soft inky darkness for an hour, our only guide the murmuring voices of the moving shadows ahead. Then the natives ceased poling. Apparently we had reached the end of our journey. A dozen dugouts were drawn up on the bank near-by. "We have arrived," our guides announced. When I asked where, they said, "At the end of the water, of course."

They knew nothing about a further passage to the south, beyond the fact, "It is a long ways from here." I did find out that the owners of the pangas drawn up on the bank lived in a little village "up the trail." No, they were not going to the village, they said. They had come to hunt alligators. Would we like to go hunting with them? Later, we promised, we would return and hunt, but first we must go to the village. "Bueno," they said. "We will be along the estero not far from here."

We started up the pitch-dark trail, feeling our way along the jungle walls, laughing and stumbling along in the darkness; and wondering what kind of a reception awaited us. A host of dogs began barking, then we saw the flickering lights of the cooking fires. Some one shouted, "Buenos noches." We shouted back a hearty response.

As we entered the small clearing where a dozen huts nestled under great trees, a husky boy ran to meet us. He took us at once to the headman, who graciously welcomed us, and invited us to enter his house. This was the usual native establishment. A thatched roof set on poles, with latticed sides, was the living room. It was furnished with several tables, low benches, and hammocks. A smaller room, roofed and sided, the family's sleeping quarters, adjoined it. The kitchen was a thatched roof without sides.

After the introductions were over, I asked about a passage to the next lagoon. It was ten miles away, and the portage would have to be made by oxcart, our host informed me. He also politely mentioned the fee—six pesos—for the trip.

We were more than anxious to get in on the alligator hunt, so after dinner we excused ourselves, promising to return the next day, and returned down the trail to the canoe. Our search for the hunters was short. One fellow had fastened a carbide light to his hat, and stood in the bow of the panga, with his harpoon in his hand, searching the banks with the beam of light. The line fastened to the harpoon head was very heavy.

Ginger paddled, while I made our harpoon ready. Not to be outdone, I fastened the anchor line to its head, since one apparently had to have heavy tackle to catch alligators. Quietly we manoeuvred the canoe close behind the hunters, trying to be as silent as they were.

We all sat motionless until the carbide's beam steadied on two points of light down the estero. Then slowly, noiselessly, we glided ahead. The panga moved inches at a time; and it seemed hours before we were close enough to see the alligator's great head. It was back in among the mangrove roots, and still too far away to harpoon. Carefully, inch by inch, we crept under the overhanging branches, working our way round the roots, until we were within easy range.

Then for some unknown reason the natives stopped and waited. At first we were puzzled by the delay. Then we could see that the animal was facing us. The head and back of an alligator is armoured with a thick, tough hide which it is almost impossible to penetrate with a harpoon. The natives were waiting for it to turn sideways, so that they could strike at the softer flesh just back of the foreleg.

There was a movement of the dark body among the mangroves. The light flickered as the man on the bow hurled his harpoon. Sounds of a tremendous commotion, that drowned out all the other night noises, came from the roots. The light went out, and then a match flared. The men in the dugout had changed places, and the man with the carbide was trying to relight it. The panga rocked violently. The match went out. He cursed and lit another.

We backed away to give them room to fight. Something slapped our canoe so hard that it nearly threw us out. The light flared. The alligator was now between the two boats. It repeatedly dived and came to the surface. Each time it emerged it thrashed the water with its huge tail until we were wet with spray. Ginger and I grabbed our guns and blazed away at its head, then the roar of a muzzle-loader drowned out the bark of our pistols. How we failed to shoot each other was a miracle! The alligator's struggles grew weaker, and the native hauled in on the harpoon line. This time we delivered a volley into its head that ended the rumpus. It took the com-

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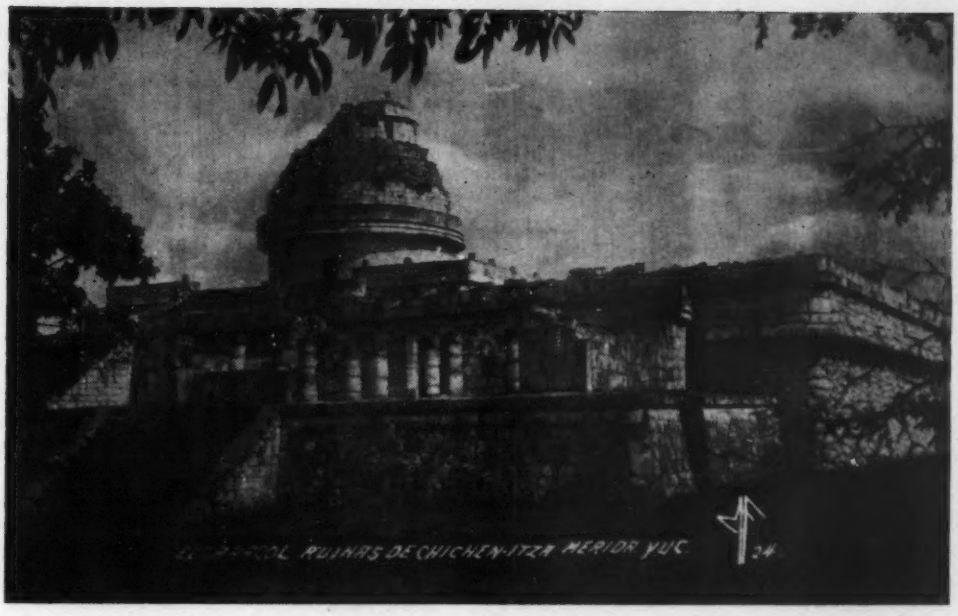


Photo. By Jose Zermeño.

Art of the Ages

By Rafael Heliodoro Valle

SIXTEEN HUNDRED YEARS AGO a nation of highly skilled artists and craftsmen were living in America. With no thought of time or glory, they dedicated themselves to their task with loving hands and pure religious zeal. They lived in a world of miracles, in a timeless time, beyond the borders of our world of speed and machines. Every stone they worked on was a votive offering. The statues, pitchers, and fabrics they turned out were the diaphanous expression of a dream. To this day, no one knows whence they came or why, at the end of the tenth century, they scattered into lands unknown.

They were the Mayas of what we call the Old Empire. Most of them lived in a corner of Honduras. Their capital was called Copán, a splendid, sonorous word, like almost all their geographical names.

These people executed remarkable jade carvings and covered polished surfaces of basalt with faces that still smile at us. They cultivated corn and independently invented the zero. Museums and the pages of many books are filled with evidence of their industrial artistry. They themselves kept a record of their historic events. While it is true that they tamed neither electricity nor animals and never used iron, they left us fantastic architecture, realistic sculpture, and painting from which our contemporary artists still can learn.

The Mayas' favorite symbol was the quetzal—the most resplendent of all birds. To this lovely creature with blood-red breast, bejeweled crest, and luxurious raiment, they gave the rank of prince. The quetzal was grafted onto the serpent, and the combination produced the enchanting sphinx of ancient America, which bore the name Quetzalcoatl in the Nahua tongue, or Kukulkán in Maya (from **kan**, serpent, and ku, bird). On his breast Quetzalcoatl wore the jewel of the wind; in his right hand the Mayas placed a torch.

They believed that the blood of deer and hummingbird, jaguar and quetzal, flowed in their veins. Unlike the otherwise more civilized Indians who succeeded them, they did not eat human flesh. In fact, they observed many of the moral precepts the Spaniards were to bring with the discovery of America. They spoke a language of wisdom, whose secrets scholars have still not completely deciphered. They playde ball games and bathed in the open air with the innocense of the birds. The dance was one of their means of self-expression.

Whether archeologist or vacationer, today's visitor to Copán is struck first by the statues or steles that dominate the mountain landscape. Those gods and men lived in a feast of color that has slowly faded away, but their serene faces and sumptuous robes defy rain, wind, and eternity. Appropriately, the undying figures bear the mysterious Oriental smile of the million and a half present-day Mayas.

This people was obviously a nation of great sculptors. Perhaps they brought from their land of origin the crystallized experience that enabled them to manipulate ideas and fancies with instruments chiseled from the hardest stone and to handle huge blocks of basalt without cranes.

From clay the Mayas fashioned figures and ornamental frets, like those of the Greeks, that are still being brought back to life by the archeologists. Their pottery was adorned with animals that spoke an esoteric language in the pages of their sacred book, the "Popol Vuh." With consummate skill, their craftsmen wrought headdresses for priests and warriors out of gold, jade, and the plumes of macaws and quetzals. That culture has aroused many emotions and taught countless lessons to every Americanist from Stephens and Catherwood down to Maudslay and Morley.

After 1502, when Columbus first sighted the mainland in Honduras, a new culture appeared in

America. Quetzalcoatl, lord of the wind and the light, fled like an exorcised devil. New artists raised a new kind of temple, and gold shone once more in altars and the crowns of saints. But no traces remain in Honduras of the art of this sixteenth century, when new cities were rising. In spite of its central geographical position, it was impossible to build roads there or to increase the population. Nor would the country's economy permit any improvement in living standards. From time to time, however, artistic influences that paved the way for the builders of palaces and cathedrals in Mexico and Peru filtered in from Cuba or Guatemala.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw construction of the famous Castle of Amoa, completed in 1775, which still defiantly faces a sea once infested with marauding pirates. This old castle compares favorably with any example of that period's military architecture. Another great monument of the era is the Cathedral of Comayagua, built 1678-1697, whose facade reveals "a distant influence of Indian feeling" and whose "capitals with their Ionic volutes present an interesting local variation of the baroque."

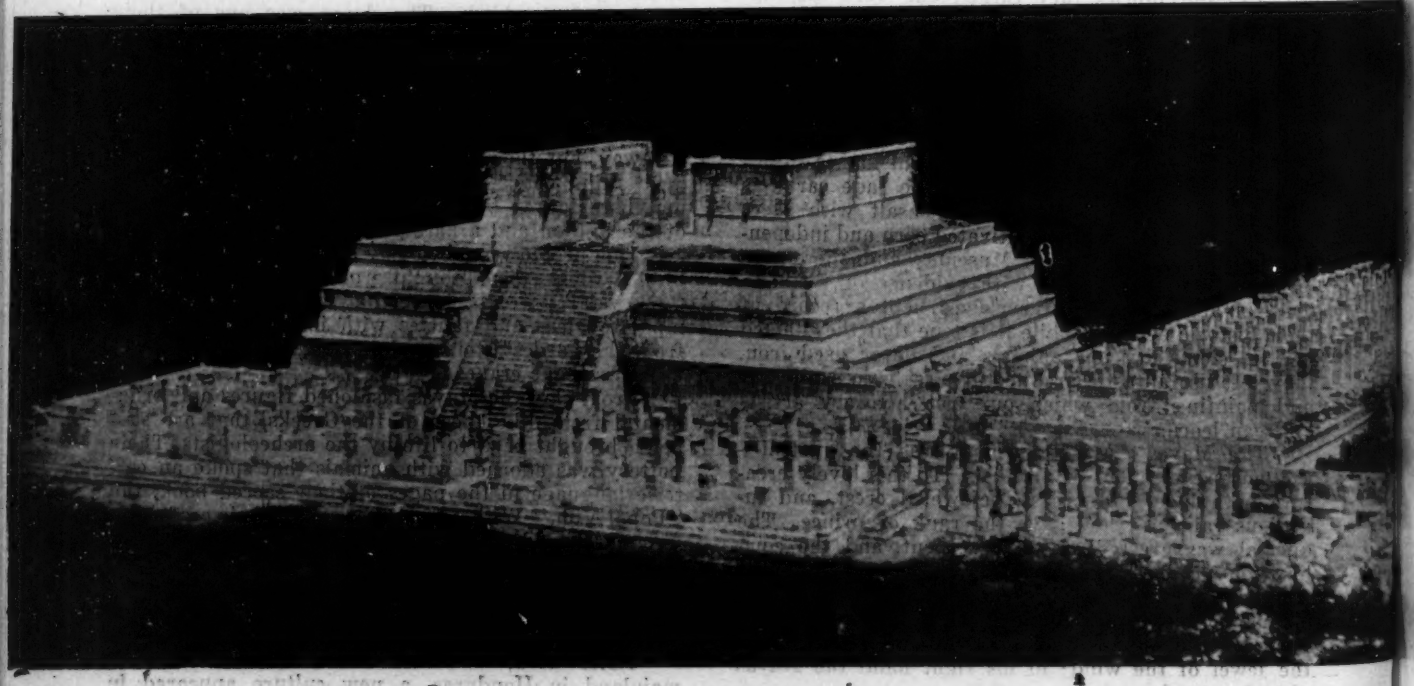
That cathedral, according to Manuel Toussaint, like the Cathedral of San Miguel in Tegucigalpa dating from 1675-1682 and other Honduran churches, belongs to the "Andean style." The Comayagua Cathedral is notable for its floral ornamentation, while the one in the capital shows something of the "Madrid baroque" as well as eighteenth-century "mudéjar" (Spanish Moorish) influence.

The names of two artists are associated with the Cathedral of San Miguel of Tegucigalpa: the Guatemalan architect Gregorio Nacianceno Quiroz and the Honduran painter José Miguel Gómez. The main altar has twenty-two pieces of handwrought silver, the tabernacle twenty-one more. On that altar, according to Jorge Ypsilanti de Moldavia, "arabesques are intertwined with Renaissance and Byzantine motives, with a plateresque influence."

Mountain-ringed Tegucigalpa is the most beautiful colonial city in Central America. In some of its streets and houses, time itself seems to be embalmed. It is a city of stone, sun, and blue sky. There a Franciscan poet, José Trinidad Reyes, had his home A poet in his life as well as his work, Reyes introduced the first piano to Honduras, wrote verses, and composed sacred music. With nine pastorals he laid the foundation for the theater in Central America.

But the people of Honduras are not given to singing. Although they are gifted with a lively imagination, they have no poetic folklore of ballads and tales; no typical native costume; no dance peculiarly their own.

Today Pablo Zelaya Sierra and Arturo López Rodezno, founder of the Fine Arts School in Tegucigalpa, are the outstanding Honduran painters; Fernando Pineda Ugarte, the leading architect; while music critics laud violinist Humberto Cano. They are some of the craftsmen who carry on the artistic tradition in this ancient land of art.



An Unreproachful Dialogue

By W. P. Covington-Lawson



Oil. By Flavio Cabral.

THERE he was, as big as life, yet I knew that he had died a year ago. I had been one of the pallbearers. I remembered as we slowly paced to his grave that he owed me fifty pesos that I would never get, because I would be ashamed to ask the widow, who also had been a friend—a very good friend. I remembered also when I felt the weight of the casket and knew that he was finally beyond recall, how happy I was that he had never known just how good a friend I really had been to his wife. Ah, well! Fifty pesos, not so much after all. But what did it matter now?

There he was—inexplicable. It was he, exactly as I had seen him before he died.

He came toward me smiling. "Well, Pancho," he said. "So you have come at last. I knew that you would be passing by one day or another. I have been waiting . . ."

"Chano," I said. "Chano!"

"Oh, I know what you are thinking," said Chano. "But after all we should thank ourselves and whatever it was that shaped our destinies, that now all lies and evasions are unnecessary. Now whatever happened and whatever we know of needs not be hidden. We can tell the truth. Nothing else matters. Everything now is so simple, and all these foolish little insignificant things that we thought we had hidden successfully, and all the others that we pretended not to know about are meaningless—mere chaff blown about by a summer breeze. Now we can look at ourselves without the sorry little masks, and ask ourselves—what were we? Yes—just maggots crawling in our own slime . . . And now, Pancho, how glad I am to hold your hand without fear, without subterfuge, and to tell you that I knew all the time what was going on between you and Conchita, to tell you that it really did not matter much. I loved her, but there was nothing I could do about it. You two seemed to be made for each other. I never had what she wanted, and you seemed to supply it. It is good to meet you here at last and tell the truth, and confess valor or cowardice; though here, somehow, there does not seem very much difference between them.

"Chano," I said, "what in hell are you talking about?"

He looked at me smiling. "Pancho, you have not been here long enough to know that eventually truth is the only thing worth while, that there are no phantoms, only realities, and that nearly every move that we ever made in our lifetimes was not made in good faith but according to the needs of the moment, and that most of the things we did were of no consequence. Yes, my dear friend, the one thing left us is memory, and the time to draw up a full summary of our lives. And I can assure you that as we make up this balance we get more pleasure out of remembering the times when we were kind to the corner news-vendor, or petted the cook on the shoulder, or gave the gardener an extra peso for the rose he gave us as we passed through the garden, than all the remembrances of our petty triumphs—of the banquet when we passed into the ranks of vice-presidents of when we were appointed ambassador to Never-Neverland—all our sorry little triumphs that loomed so large at the time."

I looked at him with amazement. "Chano," I said, but I got no farther.

"Pancho," he continued. "I was deeply hurt. I bore my humiliation like an invisible wound. I dwelled in a living hell. But everything presently comes to an end, and all this ended when I died . . . But it followed me yet. I watched your progress afterwards —my mind was still on you and Conchita. And I saw that something else ended with me, that you didn't give a snap for each other after I had gone . . . It was strange, but being here I could understand. Here we don't give a snap for anything. Here there is no need to pretend, to conceal—here everything is——"

"But, Chano," I broke in. "You are dead."

He looked at me, and a wistful sort of triumphant smile quivered about his lips, then spread over his face. "I am dead," he said, ". . . and so are you."

Patterns of an Old City

UNPROFANED SANCTUARY

By Howard S. Phillips

THE words shaped themselves in his mind like a fleeting echo, making him wonder if they were truly his own or if unconsciously he was plagiarizing from something he had read. No, he thought as he wrote them down. They seem clear and precise; they truly express what I wish to say, so they must be my own. Simple words, directly communicative and pregnant with meaning, the kind of words that spring from pure emotion and cannot be developed cerebrally. I think I have a telling opening line which spontaneously engenders the sequence. It sets a clear course for the body of the poem, projects its total form, and even suggests a fitting closing line.

He sensed a minute exhilaration when the words of the final line also emerged in his mind, and he pencilled them down hastily at the foot of the page. Now, he thought, I have the begining and the end, the floor and the roof of the thing, and I must build the walls so that it will firmly hold together.

The squeak of don Guillermo's swivel chair beyond the opaque glass partition tore him away from his pleasant engrossment. It reminded him harshly of his interrupted task, of the Lauro Buendia, S. A. folio, bulky with documents, which rested under his elbow, and of the numerous other folios he would have to revise before the end of the month that was only three days off. The squeak was not exactly an aminous summons; it was more truly a tacit warning, a timely reminder that the opaque glass did not entirely conceal his dereliction, that it was quite all right for him to squander a reasonable portion of his working time on his innocuous scribbling, providing he did not fall in arrears with his task.

A troublesome account, this Lauro Buendia, S. A., he thought. Substantial clients, though. Large seasonal volume. But must be handled with kid gloves. A touchy outfit. Regular fiends for refund claims. Shipping millions, yet always ready to quibble over a few pesos. Amid the surrounding click and hum of typewriters and adding machines his mind gradually became absorbed in his work. It was, however, a partial, an automatic, absorption, sufficient for a thorough performance of his routinary task, and which yet left a part of his mind detached from it.

It was this peculiar aptitude for preserving a fixed inner detachment which made his drearily uneventful and prosaic life as a minor official of a customs brokerage office endurable. He could give his time and energies to his monotonous and unromantic task so long as he guarded this small portion of his being, this unviolated sanctuary, to himself. Indeed, while he inalienably belonged to this office and his existence was integrally bound to its humdrum routine, his veritable life was reduced to that small and unassailable portion. Therein was his refuge and escape.

Anyone seeing his gaunt figure stooping over his littered desk would hardly suspect the presence in him of such a strange duality. There was nothing about his drab appearance that even remotely suggested a tiny flickering of creative ardor or a quenchless thirst for the sublime. And yet such things were profoundly hidden inside him. In his youth, he firmly believed, in fact, that he would consecrate his life to letters, and that any other kind of occupation he might be compelled to follow would merely serve as a transient means toward achieving this final goal. And while the exigencies of life made this goal unattainable, he guarded this belief intact.

At the outset it was not, to be sure, merely an idle longing. He began earnestly enough, read omnivorously, filled innumerable reams of paper, and for a time it seemed to him that he had crossed the threshold. He actually won a premium of a thousand pesos in a national contest, as the author of the year's outstanding novel. But the fame it brought him was ephemeral and the royalties he gained from its sale amounted to less than three hundred pesos. He wrote a second novel, which never found a publisher; began a third, but was unable to finish it. And since then, throughout more than twenty years, compelled to earn a living for himself, for his mother and an old maid sister, the goal of his youth became hidden in that reduced inner portion of his being which made his colorless existence bearable. Now, stealing time amid his office routine, or cheating himself of rest after work-hours, he dabbled in poetry.

He was the oldest employee in the office and he did his job well despite his truant lapses, and though his salary had hardly grown in years he regarded himself extremely fortunate for being allowed to carry along in his rut. In the office, his oddity was commonly accepted with tolerance, with slight amusement and even with respectful affection, for he was usually addressed by his associates with the prefix "don" and the added syllable of "itos." Sitting at his desk in the corner, near the chief's partitioned enclosure, don Carlitos, with all his foibles, emanated an air of calm stability, of unpreoccupied efficiency, which exerted a wholesome moral effect on the rest of the office.

* * *

He had gone through the Buendia file, finding, to his relief, that it was in fairly good order and contained very little in the way of slight discrepancies that could bring on contentions, then dug into the following files. The thought in the back of his mind that he need not unduly exert himself to wind up his task before the month was up lifted his spirits, and as he went on with his work his practiced mind functioned automatically, without complete immersion, the words of his poem unobtrusively forming themselves within its hidden recess.

The young men and women who were busy at their own desks paid slight attention to the somewhat eccentric behavior of don Carlitos—his occasional mutterings and the mysterious symbols he periodically traced with his forefinger in the air. They were quite accustomed to such mild eccentricities, and if his conduct aroused in them a degree of passing amusement it only slightly intrigued their curiosity. Don Carlitos was simply a funny old bird, just a bit cracked in the head, and he was hardly important enough to justify anything more than superficial concern or to provide the theme for anything more than casual gossip.

And yet, although beyond conventional amiability he cultivated no intimate friendships in the office and his private life was something of a closed book, it was commonly known by way of such casual gossip that despite his diverting oddity don Carlitos was

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Drawing. By Jose Antonio Rodrigues.

Thomas Gage

A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY ENGLISHMAN'S VISIT TO MEXICO

By William Mayer

THERE must be something in the air of Mexico which leads many visitors to write books on what they have seen. The earliest visitor who wrote on Mexico was Bernal Díaz del Castillo, who accompanied not only Hernán Cortés during his conquest, but also the two earlier expeditions under Hernández de Córdoba and Juan de Grijalva. Then we have the letters of Cortés himself, the accounts of Gómara, Clavijero, Sahagún, and many others. Early in the last century, the two outstanding works on Mexico in English, were those of Madam Calderón de la Barca, Scottish wife of the first Spanish Minister to Mexico, and Prescott's "Conquest." During the last twenty years many, many books have been written by visitors and tourists. They can be counted by the dozen in the local book-stores.

The book I am going to describe is the account of Thomas Gage's visit to Mexico, taken from his work entitled "A New Survey of the West Indies," the first edition of which was published in London in the year 1648. This book became very popular at that time as an instrument for attacking the Spanish regime in America, and ran into five further English editions within sixty-three years. Three editions appeared in France, seven in the Netherlands and one in Germany within a comparatively short period. A new edition was printed in London in 1928. The last edition of which we have notice was published in Guatemala in 1946, but is not a true translation of the original.

It was the custom in those times to dedicate all books to some prominent person, and Gage dedicated his work to Lord Fairfax, the famous general who, under Oliver Cromwell, defeated the forces of Charles I, but refused to take part in the King's trial. In his dedication, Gage makes a strong plea that England, following the example of the Dutch, should look for conquests to the New World.

The first edition also has an introductory poem by one Thomas Chaloner, grandson of Sir Thomas Chaloner, a rather famous diplomat and politician of his time, whose protrait by Van Dyke hangs in the Hermitage Gallery at Leningrad.

During the 300 years of Spanish control in America, no book could be printed without the express authority of the Church and Inquisition, so that Gage's account is the only description we have of Spanish America written with entire freedom from censorship. Neither did the Spaniards knowingly allow other Europeans to visit their colonies with the exception only of a few Italian, French, and other missionaries.

Thomas Gage was born in the year 1600 at Haling in the County of Surrey, of an old family, one of whose ancestors was said to have come over with William the Conqueror and fought at the Battle of Hastings. He was to have been trained as a Jesuit, and was sent first in 1613 to St. Omer near Calais, and then to the College at Valladolid, Spain, founded by the English Jesuit, Robert Parsons. He stayed here for less than two years, however, and against his family's wish, entered the Dominical order at Jerez, where he became known as Fray Tomás de Santa María.

In 1625, the annual party of Dominican monks was assembled for the purpose of proceding to the Philippines, and Gage joined them with the express condition that he could not remain in New Spain. They sailed from the small Port of Calés, near Cádiz, on July, 1625. After going aboard, he had to hide in a barrel of biscuit, the authorities wishing to prevent his sailing, on learning that he was an Englishman.

The convoy that year consisted of forty-one ships destined for Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo, Jamaica, Havana, Cartagena, Campeche, including sixteen for Veracruz, and there were also eight armed galleons, to accompany the fleet as far as the Canaries, in order to protect it against the Barbary and Dutch pirates.

Enjoying good weather, the fleet sighted the West Indies seven weeks later, and the passengers were allowed to land on Guadalupe Island in the Antilles. They were at first well received by the native Caribs, but when some of the Jesuit Missionaries tried to kidnap an escaped mulatto slave, who had lived on this island for twelve years and founded a family, a number of the Spaniards were attacked and killed.

Two days later the ships left Guadalupe, and passed along the coasts of Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo, Jamaica, and Cuba, scattering to their various destinations. The ships for New Spain arrived at San Juan de Ulua, nine weeks after leaving Spain, in the year 1625, only 106 years after the landing of Hernán Cortés.

Gage describes his entertainment at Veracruz by Dominican monks, who he says, were plentifully supplied with wines, sweetmeats, and other luxuries, passing his time with them by playing cards and dice. He says that the place then had some 3,000 inhabitants, of whom some were very wealthy, but all the houses were constructed of wood. The party remained at the port only two days, because, already at that time, the yellow fever carried off many travellers.

The party then rode on muleback, and was féted everywhere by the Indians, who gave the monks of their best in exchange for their blessings. On the third day, they arrived at Jalapa, and were lavishly entertained by the Franciscan Friars established there.

As Gage travels along, he describes the places he sees, and also gives a lengthy account of the Conquest of Mexico, taken no doubt, from the works of Gamara and other historians.

Passing through Tlaxcala, the party arrived at Puebla, then, according to Gage, a thriving town of 10,000 inhabitants. Good cloth was already being produced, equal to the best from Segovia in Spain, and also fine felts. The Mint was second in importance only to that of Mexico City.

Continuing through Huejotzingo and between the two volcanoes, Gage arrived at Mexico City eleven days after leaving Veracruz, and was lodged in the Dominican Mission at San Jacinto, a resting place for those who were to continue on to the Philippines. This Mission belonged to the Dominicans of Manila, and was not subordinate to the Superiors of Mexico. It was built in a fifteen acre orchard, Gage says, but he shows some loss of memory when he describes the many tropical fruits growing there, such as mangos, chicozapotes and papayas. The party remained here for five months, awaiting the arrival of the yearly galleon from Manila to Acapulco.

Gage describes the Mexico City of his time in some detail mentioning its many canals and the aqueducts bringing in fresh water from the springs of Santa Fé and Chapultepec. He states that the Mint coined silver brought eighty leagues from Zacatecas, that explorations had been made as far as New Mexico, and it was then thought that the mainland might extend to the English plantations of Virginia.

* * *

Having received discouraging news about the state of affairs in the Philippines, and not wishing to become a martyr, Gage and three of his companions decided to escape to Guatemala. The night before the intended departure for Acapulco, they procured a guide and a rough map of the country. They had horses waiting for them in Mexico City, and left by way of Guadalupe to deceive possible pursuers. Riding by night and hiding by day, they went around Lake Texcoco and reached Atlixco. From there they continued by way of Chiautla and Zumpango, a large Indian village near Tlapa, and entered the Mixteca region, finally arriving at Oaxaca, about eighty leagues from Mexico which then had about 2,000 inhabitants. There were then already a number of cloisters in Oaxaca, the richest being that of the Dominicans. Trade from Oaxaca to Veracruz was carried down the Alvarado, better known as the Papaloapam River, then navigable to small boats almost as far as Cuicatlan.

Gage and his companions stopped here only three days, being afraid they might be denounced by Mexican monks, who were not too friendly towards Spaniards, and continued on to Chiapas. They required no money for travelling, because the Indians had standing orders to supply all priests with free lodging and provisions, as well as horses and guides to the next village.

The party continued through Nexapa and Tehuantepec and then, instead of taking the coast road through Soconusco, went inland by way of Ixtepec, where Gage became separated from his companions for a time, and finding himself lost, had to sleep on the bare ground. After many trials, the fugitives arrived at San Cristóbal Las Casas, and threw themselves on the mercy of the Prior of Chiapas, who, after leaving them in suspense for some time, offered them refuge, imposing on them a nominal penance of a meal of bread and water, followed immediately, however, by a rich banquet. Gage remained in San Cristóbal for six months, being appointed to teach Latin at the cloister school.

Gage describes Chiapas as rich in agriculture and cattle, but that, as no mines existed, the Province was somewhat neglected by the Spaniards. The people, he says, were proud but ignorant, and he gives an amusing account of a conversation with a Spanish Don, who asked him in all seriousness whether the Sun and Moon in England were of the same colour as in Chiapas, whether the English went barefoot like the Indians, and whether all England could enjoy such a dainty dish as frijoles. Friar Gage promised to study these and similar weighty questions until

their next meeting, and then told him a string of nonsense which the Spaniard not only swallowed whole, but praised his wisdom to the skies.

Gage devotes a whole chapter to chocolate, from the growing of the cocoa bean to its preparation. He gives several recipes for preparing the drink, with sugar, cinnamon, clove, aniseed, vanilla, almonds, and three kinds of chile: tonachile, chiltipin, and chilpalagua. Chocolate was also adulterated with achiote and corn meal. He ascribes his twelve years of good health in those parts to his drinking of five cups of chocolate daily, and he never travelled without a boxfull of chocolate tablets and paste.

After leaving Chiapas, Gage went on to Guatemala, stopping a week at Comitán with a French friar who showed him the surrounding country, and they were féted everywhere by the natives and local clergy. Here he was supplied with a saddle mule, a pack mule for his bedding, and Indian carrier for his leather petaca with chocolate and the utensils for preparing it, as well as Indian guides. After leaving the village of Sacualpam, Gage was thrown from his mule, but not hurt, and this was proclaimed by the Indians with him as a miracle from Heaven. At the next village he was plied with gifts, and collected sixty reales in money alone. The local priest wished him to remain longer, because he was receiving his share. Gage was much amused, saying that he earned this money only for falling from a mule and not breaking his neck.

Arriving in Guatemala, Gage found himself among friends ,and in February 1627, was appointed to teach Logic and Physics at the Dominican Convent, a post he filled for two years.

In December 1629, the Bishop of Guatemala ordained him a priest, with full power to preach sermons and hear confessions, excepting only those of nuns, who were reserved to older priests and the Bishop himself.

A very complete description is given of local conditions and customs of the natives, and Gage mentions incidentally that some of the Indian tribes of Verapaz were not yet subdued, so that the road to Yucatán could not be used.

* * *

After three years, Gage applied for leave to return home before completing ten years of preaching the Gospel. Nevertheless, he wrote to an English Friar at San Lucar in Spain, to intercede with the Genéral of the Dominican Order in Rome, who sent him a permit, which, however, he could not use. Meanwhile, he accepted the invitation of the Dominican Prior of Coban in Honduras, to visit those parts, and travelled in the company of fifty Spaniards, who had some encounters with the unsubdued Indians. From Coban he went down to the Gulf of Honduras, and took ship to Trujillo, returning to Guatemala by land.

It is rather remarkable that Gage never mentions any ancient ruins, so it seems certain that all memory of the old Maya civilization was lost at that time, and even the name "Maya" does not appear in his book.

Gage then became a parish priest, successively, in the Indian towns of Pinola, Petapa, Mixco, and Amatitlán, all near Guatemala City, and soon learned the Peconchi language, in which he was able to preach, and at the end of his book there is a short grammar or this Mayan dialect.

During his service as a priest, and after sending half the Church offerings to his Bishop, Gage managed to accumulate over nine thousand pesos. He sets down in detail now much he was paid for baptisms, marriages, burials, masses and confessions, and says that in some years he was particularly fortunate, such as when there was a plague of locusts, an earthquake, floods, or other calamities, as the natives were then more lavish with their gifts.

Not being able to secure permission to leave Guatemala, notwithstanding his permit from Rome, Gage again decided to escape. He changed half his money into pearls and precious stones, sold his furniture and paintings, sent his baggage ahead with a trusted Indian, and accompanied by a mulatto servant, rode through El Salvador to Nicaragua, staying at Granada for some time.

All regular sailings across the Carribean had been stopped that year, because of Dutch and English buccaneers, so that Gage had to continue on horseback to Cártago, and then on to the north coast of Costa Rica, where he found a small frigate. No sooner had this ship put to sea, when it was overtaken by a Dutch vessel commanded by a mulatto from Havana (named Dieguillo) a Lieutenant of the famous Dutch pirate, Pie de Palo. Gage lost all his money and jewels, the result of twelve years' labour among the Indians, saving only a small amount he had sewn into his doublet and quilt. After all the goods were removed from the vessel, it was allowed to return, and Gage went back to Cártago, to live on charity and the saying of masses. Some time later, he went to Nicoya on the south or Pacific coast, and found a small ship trading with Panamá. Owing to contrary winds, this trip took four weeks instead of four or five days, and the passengers and crew almost died of thirst. In Panamá, Gage rested fifteen days at the Dominican Cloister, and then set out on horseback across the Isthmus, proceeding down the Chagres river by boat, and so to Portobello. Here, after waiting for some weeks, he sailed in the annual treasure fleet to Cartagena, where he met some English prisoners, being taken to Spain. The fleet then sailed for Havana, arriving in eight days, and soon after, Gage continued in the same fleet to Spain, arriving after ninety days' voyage, at San Lucar, near Cádiz, in the year 1637, having been absent from Spain almost twelve and one half years.

Gage now exchanged his Dominican habit for a suit of English clothes and landed at Dover, twenty-four years after having left home. He could then no longer speak his Mother tongue, having been thirteen years old when he left England.

This ends Gage's travels in America, but his book, which was written eleven years after his return, contains a final chapter.

As he had been desinherited by his father, he lived with a brother in London, and being much troubled in his conscience about religious matters, decided to go to Rome. He first visited an older brother, who was colonel of a regiment in Flanders, then in the field against the Hollanders. Through this brother he obtained letters of introduction to several Cardinals. He describes his journey up the Rhine to Frankfurt, where he stayed a fortnight to look into the Lutheran doctrine, and then continued in the company of merchants and hired soldiers through the Tyrol into Italy. Embarking at Leghorn, his vessel was attacked by French pirates, and he again lost all his money, this time only five pounds, as he had thoughtfully provided himself with Bills of Exchange.

In Rome, Gage had many interviews with high-placed persons, and describes the political manoeuvers of various English candidates for the Cardinal's hat, which, he says, thoroughly disgusted him, and he thereupon requested an order transferring him to the Dominican Convent at Orleans, but he finally decided to renounce the Catholic Faith and returned to England.

Continued on page 46



"Calla Lilies."

WAX SCULPTURE



"Old Charro."

By Luis Hidalgo.



"Girl in the Tropics."



"The Raincoat."

"The Pueblerino."





LANDSCAPE. Oil. By Emilio Rosenblueth.

Among the Lacandones

By Vicente de Caso-Mier

WHEN we hear of an exploring expedition, our minds invariably drift to Africa, Egypt, or India. We forget that our own continent contains civilizations whose very origins are lost in antiquity, lying unknown and unexplored.

When I was invited to form part of a scientific expedition as pilot, I did not foresee the marvelous experiences in store for me: wonderful regions, exotic and fascinating in their wild beauty, rich in tropical luxuriance, and inhabited by races absolutely unspoilled by the hand of modern civilization.

My work as pilot consisted of flying ahead in search of possible landing places. This enabled me, while the rest of the party was engaged in research work on foot, to investigate my surroundings carefully, to note in detail and at close range the different things I saw, and to analyze the experiences I enjoyed.

Our expedition left Mexico City by plane one lovely morning, headed for the two southern states of Tabasco and Chiapas. We were full of enthusiasm, and of curiosity as to what we would find of archaeological value in the unknown country ahead of us.

If you take a piece of paper and crumple it in your hand, you will get a good idea of the topography of Chiapas. It is a country of wooded uneven hills, entanglements of forests and rivers, and dotted with lakes. Because of the extreme heat, distance, and lack of proper communications, it has remained untouched, primitive and genuine, beautiful in its savageness. On one exploring trip in my plane, flying alone along the course of the Usumacinta River, I was surprised at counting twelve lakes, though our maps mention only five.

Landing near the shore of a lake, I investigated my surroundings. I was alone. From the forest bordering the lake, came a confusion of noises, making me stand still to listen. Bands of screeching monkeys flying from tree to tree, probably frightened by the noise of my motor. Wild parrots in bright colors, birds of all descriptions. Suddenly I saw faces peering at me from behind the trees. Expressionless faces with blank, nondescript stares. Slowly, one by one, a tribe of Lacandone Indians glided toward me, seeming dazed by the huge bird that had dropped from the sky with such a powerful song. A gruesome procession of human beings, all with bows and arrows, headed by their chief.

For a moment I was at a loss. All the tales I had heard about the Lacandones returned to me in a flash. Father Laborde, in his book, speaks of their cannibalism, of how they used to torture and kill young male prisoners, of how two expeditions during the last century perished at their hands. I felt very uneasy in the sense of being alone, surrounded by enemies,

defenseless, one against many. Cautiously, with gliding steps, they advanced, absolutely without expression. I retreated against my plane, thinking that I could, as a last resource, frighten them with the noise of the motor.

Suddenly I realized that my fears were groundless. They ignored me completely. They surrounded my machine, touching its wings, peering inside like children with a new toy. They had not come in a hostile spirit, but started jabbering in an unknown language among themselves. I took advantage of their interest to produce the little trinkets I had brought along with me. Small cheap mirrors with bright-colored backs caught their fancy most. They made me think of monkeys in a zoo when children throw them bits of glass and they see their own reflections for the first time. Their faces finally lighted up and lost the exasperating deathlike stare. All accepted the mirrors with shouts and leaps, and two of them started blowing into sea-shells, producing a sort of unrhyhmed music.

* * *

In appearance the Lacandones are Mongolian, but we do not know how they came to America, though there are many theories on the subject. We do know that they are direct descendants of a Mayan tribe. From the most remote times known to us, they were much feared by other tribes, and were known for their bravery and belicose instincts. They resisted the Spanish invaders tenaciously. They know the secret of a vegetable poison ouroli or echete.

The ancestors of these Lacandones must have been strong, tall men, but they have now shrunk in size considerably, as has been proved by comparisons of available data. Now they are dwarflike, almost like pigmies, sickly, degenerate, and weak in appearance, but possessing considerable strength. Their clothing is made from the bark of a tree called mahua, which they soften in water until it becomes like cloth. It is slipped over the head like a tunic. Then, with needles made of thorns painted vivid red, it is sewed at the shoulders and sides with palm-fiber.

The Lacandones of today are a peaceful tribe, calmly vegetating on their land. Their principal food is the totopostle, a corn bread, something like the tortilla, which they always carry with them in little bags hanging from their shoulders. They also eat fish and game hunted with bow and arrow, and use ashes instead of salt. Their drink is balche, a fermentation of yucca and sweet potato. The women of the tribe are not allowed to drink balche, though they help to make it by chewing the yucca and sweet potato roots and then depositing them in jícaras, where the fermentation takes place.

Men and women dress alike, and have long, loose hair. Women are so scarce that marriages are often seen between father and daughter, brother and sister, between a boy of twelve and a woman of sixty. They worship the gods of fire, sun, rain, and wind, and have many small temples where they present ex-votos to the deity, offerings consisting of jars and jugs of all sizes. On one religious date, called the Ukasavina, a pilgrimage is made in honor of the new balche, which they present to Acohym, the oldest of their gods, who is venerated on a small island in Lake Peltha.

* * *

After my first experience, profiting from the fact that the expedition had gone on foot on its archaeological researches, I flew the next day to visit the Lacandones again, this time accompanied by an interpreter. The noise of the motor warned them of my arrival, and they received me with the music of tomtoms and shell. They ran and jumped in all directions, and I had a difficult time landing without killing half the tribe. They were in a state of excitement, of which I proudly thought I was the cause, but my interpreter told me that their joy was due to balche, as a wedding had just taken place. There was no use in trying to get any data from them in that state, so I amused myself by listening to their weird language. It is a Maya dialect, called Tzeltal, and is utterly different from any language I have ever heard.

* * *

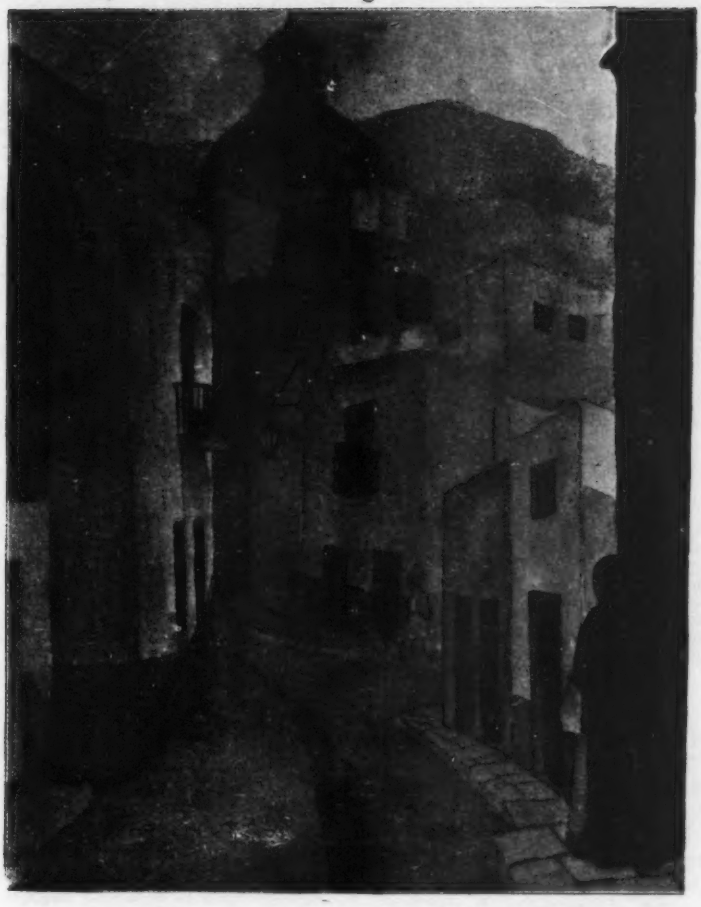
About 130 kilometers from El Real is a place called San Pedro, where, flying low, one can clearly see a mass of ruins. They seem very interesting because of their size and the many pyramids which surround them. Unfortunately, I could find no suitable landing spot in that mountain-circled site. My guide urged me to turn back, as the Lacandones, it seemed, never allow anyone to approach the ruins, which they guard jealously. However, I flew as low as possible, cursing my luck that I could not get nearer. The Indians believe that the sun rises out of these ruins. What great secret to they hold? Cuauhtemoc's tomb? Cuauhtemoc, "Descending Eagle," who married a daughter of Moctezuma, who led the defense of Mexico City against the Spanish invaders, who suffered martyrdom at their hands rather than reveal the hiding place of the famous treasure. It is said that he was finally strangled by the Spaniards in southern Mexico, and that his faithful followers took his body, to bury it and the treasure somewhere along the Usumacinta.

* * *

Days later, we encamped in an immense forest, dense as a jungle. None of us could sleep. The insects seemed to be awaiting their repast, at every step a new danger seemed to await us. The "flying serpents" swung their turquoise and yellow bodies from the trees by their tails, which are forked. Their name comes from their habit of throwing themselves through the air with a swishing sound around the neck of man or animal and strangling him to death.

This forest is very beautiful. The sun has probably never penetrated the dense dome of foliage, and we could see no more than three yards before us. The Indians we had hired to lead us were indolent, and refused to work long at a time. They opened the way little by little with their machetes. After four days of being lost, eating yucca root when our provisions ran short, and being on the alert always for animals and insects, we finally found our way out.

I wanted to remain, to study and explore these wonderful places. But I had only hours snatched here and there, and my duty took me away from this enchanting region. I shall always see it and hear it. The tropical nights, exotic with a thousand perfumes. The Lacandones singing their strange songs, accompanied by tomtoms and the wild sounds of sea-shell, songs which may tell of a great past, of ancestors who were kings and rulers, of Cuauhtemoc, and of a sad present. I see them squatting on the ground, their expressionless faces and their eyes which seem to see far away, among trees a thousand years old and often forty meters in diameter. Among the ruins of ancient cities, of temples half buried under jungles, ruins with inscriptions we cannot read, gods we do no know, set in empty places full of secrets and mysteries, without a name, but with a glorious past.



Water Color. By Ricardo Barcenas.

Mufti in Oaxaca

By Hudson Strode

A YOUNG Mexican with blue eyes, fair wavy hair, and aristocratic features had introduced himself to me as a friend of my cousin from New Orleans, who had been to Oaxaca a fortnight before with her daughter. It was this chap who took me within one of the fortress-walled private mansions, if not into Oaxacan society, because of a spot of mango juice. He had been born in Morelia of Spanish parents, and he now lived in Oaxaca, where his brother-in-law was manager of a mica mining concern. The young man was bored and looked eagerly for contacts with foreigners. There was no society and no future here, he said. He was merely marking time—for what he did not know. And he was faced with the necessity of making his own living. His patrimony had vanished when his father's estate in Michoacán had been expropriated. He had even begun to study for the priesthood—it had been long since Mexico had had a white bishop, he said—but he couldn't stick it. At present he was reduced to keeping accounts in his brother-in law's concern—a most uninspiring task.

It was a bit surprising to find a young man of twenty-one in 1943 resentful at being asked to earn his own bread. Apparently work seemed as unfitting to him as it had to the young Creole aristocrats in the halcyon days of Díaz. If he had not possessed pride in such degree, and the high wide brow of a scholar, I daresay he could have pursued the career of a gigolo with success. For he was quite good-looking, and my cousin had written that he was a divine dancer. He spoke French and English as well as he did Castilian Spanish. Besides ingratiating manners, he had a bright, if cynical, wit. But he seemed a lost young man, whose pseudo-salvation would doubtless come only if he married an heiress of one of the new industrialists, whom he despised.

He had dropped in after dinner, about nine-thirty, to see if he could be of any service, and he found me concerned about an ugly spot on my coat.

"But come," he said, "we can easily remedy that. My sister has a bottle of American cleaning fluid—'Mufti,' it is called. If you would walk to our house."

"Mufti in Oaxaca! Wonderful." So I excused myself to Myers and our two businessmen friends, and said we were going to get some Mufti.

The man from Boston had had just enough Spanish brandy to find the situation highly diverting. "That's a fine new name for it—'mufti'!" He winked

a ribald eye, and grinned mockingly. "Better than anything we ever thought up to call it at college. Is 'mufti' Alabama slang or Zapotec? Throw a pebble at my window when you come back, and I'll unlock the hotel door."

* * *

There is no more night life in Oaxaca than there is in Morelia. At ten o'clock the plaza was as quiet as a graveyard. The few people who lingered on the benches or at the sidewalk café tables sat as if lost in meditation and undesirous of speech. On the Avenida de Independencia we turned left and went down the faintly lighted street between the rows of stout-walled dwellings with the great doors so tightly shut that not a ray of light escaped through a crack. The heavy blinds at the windows were drawn, too, behind the iron grills. I thought of what D. H. Lawrence had said: "Whoever gets into the house or patio must go through these high doors. There is no other entrance, not even a needle's eye. The windows to the street are heavily barred. Each house is its own small fortress."

At a door studded with metal spikes we paused while the young man reached into his pocket for a key. Not a weighty foot-long key that should have gone with such a door, but a key to a Yale-lock that had been fitted into the door within the door. Out of the gloom of the street we entered the gloom of a great vestibule leading into a patio of paving stones edged with green planting. One pale electric bulb glowed in an ancient lamp, but it gave little more light than the incandescence of the stars in the fretwork of the blue-black ceiling of the sky.

I could discern no sound except that of our own feet treading softly on the tiled floor. Where were the family, the children, the servants? I paused to listen and to peer into the shadows. "Do come in. Let us go this way," the young man said most hospitably. We turned left along the semidark patio and entered a room whose windows would have looked upon the street if they had not been blacked out with solid wooden blinds. An unshaded electric-light bulb dangled from the high ceiling. The furniture was sparse and undistinguished, and there were no rugs on the floor.

A door opened, and a good-looking, middle-sized man in white trousers and open-necked sport shirt came in, with a book in his hand. I was introduced to the brother-in-law, the mica-company manager. He was as unaffectedly gracious as a Spanish gentleman is supposed to be. He made me feel quite at home on the stiff, uncomfortable divan. He was not fair-haired like the younger man. His hair was glossy black, his eyes gray, and his complexion white, but healthy-looking. He had been reading José Rubén Romero's story of the poetic scamp Pito Pérez. "Or rereading it," as he said. "It is as amusing and shrewd as it is bitter. And though I would have little patience with the no-good vagabond in real life, I can enjoy his wit and his similes in fiction."

The young man returned with a veritable bottle of Mufti and a clean rag of fine linen. I took off my coat. We went briskly to work. The spot disappeared with celerity.

"It would be felicitous, would it not," said the brother-in-law, regarding the process, "if we had some cosmic elixir with which we could rub out the spots of daily annoyance so neatly? Well, we do have something that helps." He went to fetch a bottle of brandy.

There were only three glasses on the tray he brought back. I knew I would not get to see his wife. One rarely sees a Mexican woman in her home. Those under forty are more than likely to be pregnant, and unlike Americans, Latin American ladies do not appear at parties or in public within a month, or even four, of the event.

"Tell me, what is society like in Oaxaca?" I asked, savoring the Fundador 1904 with appreciation. The brothers-in-law instinctively cast speaking glances at each other. Then the young man raised his eyes toward heaven. The head of the house smiled philosophically. "First, let me tell you this—against the general opinion both here and abroad," he said, "the Mexican is far more of what you call a family man than you might believe. This may not be true in the capital, but in the other cities I have found it so. Outside Mexico City, you know, there is virtually no night life. We go sometimes to the movies, and once or twice a year we dine at our friends' houses and with us. The governor's receptions are dreary beyond belief. The occasional dances are stiff and stuffy."

"The most pretentious new people go about now" the younger man put it deploringly. "The ever recurring fiestas are fine for the Indians and the uninitiated, but they hold little novelty for us. For the politicians or those scheming to get into politics or for those who have passionate social convictions, there are the men's clubs and the sidewalk-café conversation. But for the rest of us there are only the inner walls of our own homes and the growth of the children and the struggle to make money to educate them properly, whatever that may mean. The day of the wellbred white man and his traditions is about done in Mexico. Only those souls interested in uplift, political power, or graft find living exciting in Mexico today. The rest of us merely carry on, or find a little zest in being obstinate about giving in to the new ways. Though we are in active business, spiritually we have retired within the seclusion of our patios. I remain cooly conservative, but without the faintest hope. I am too intelligent to beat my head against a tidal wave. But I refuse to join in the popular chorus singing paeans to the new age of the common man."

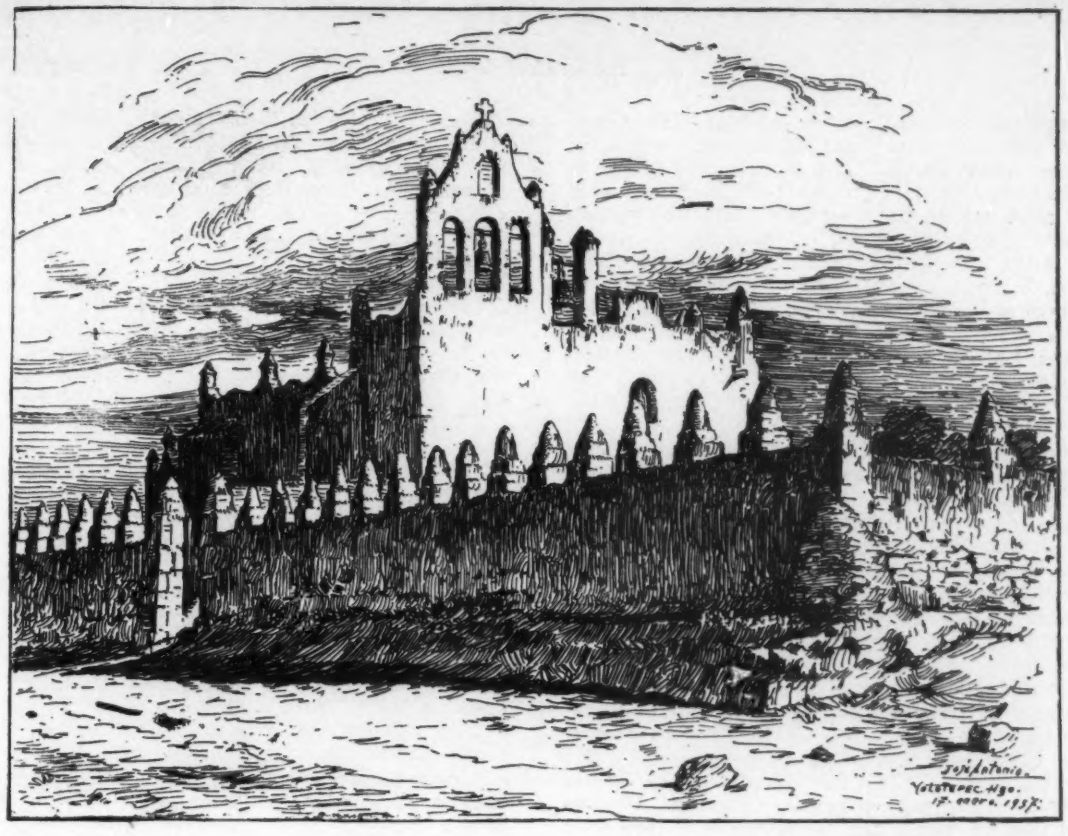
It was my cue to listen, not to argue. And I was impressed by the man's detachment and lack of passion.

"As places go, though, mind you," he said as he rose to fill my little glass, "Oaxaca is more pleasant to live in than many another provincial town might be. At least there is a breath of a once-rich heritage here that stirs memories, in the midst of the bourgeois dullness. But if I may be so bold, when one compares the attractions of Oaxaca with a town of forty thousand in one of your great states, Nebraska—for instance, well—" he gave a shrug that was both eloquent and apologetic.

* * *

The hotel door was locked when I got back. I rang, and an old Indian let me in. The door of the second-floor room of the man from Boston was open when I went by. "Back already? The mufti must have been disappointing." He laughed gleefully.

"On the contrary." I touched the lapel of my coat. "See, I am now spotless."



Drawing. By Jose Antonio Rodrigues.

Where the West Began

By Harry Carr

THE beautiful Ramona was not impressed by the memories of Coronado. She lives in the old city of Compostela, from which Coronado started one January day in 1540 on his quest for the Seven Golden Cities of Cibola. The only thing that seemed to interest Ramona very much was to show me that she could play Yo-Yo (the game that we call Diablo) better than I. Between twirling the foolish spools on a string, I asked her if she did not often dream of Coronado.

'Coronado', she said, trying to remember somebody named Coronado. 'Coronado—Coronado—Coronado . . . Que es su nombre?'

'El Señor Francisco Vazquez Coronado.'

Ramona called back into the kitchen where her mother was making some enchiladas for our lunch. 'Mamacita, conoces un tal Francisco Vázquez Coronado?' (Little Mama, do you know a man maned Francisco Vasquez Coronado?)

Mamacita said she did not know any such person, so Ramona turned back to Yo-Yo.

Ramona is about seventeen, with eyes that light up like hidden fires. Her mother runs a little store where she sells the worst enchiladas I ever tasted, pottery from Guadalajara, mule harness, and bottled beer. Ramona loves to dance, but there is no one with whom she can dance. She loves life, but the pigs in the street, the sleepy burro trains, and Mass at the old cathedral are all the excitement she can find.

Compostela drowses in its memories. It is perhaps the deadest town on the West Coast. All day long, old peons wrapped in scarlet serapes sit around in the little deserted plaza with dreams of other days in their black eyes. A young poet of my acquaintance—Donald Carr—wrote some charming verses about these old men in the park at Compostela.

Ay, hombrecito de los viejos,
Que sueño tiene en los negros ojos?
Ay, pudieramos tambien quedar
Soñando sueños por un avatar!

Oh, Little old man,
What dreams are in your black eyes?
Oh, would that we could hold our dreams
Throughout our lives!

I went to pay a visit to the old cathedral. It is a magnificent church and one of the historic shrines of our country, although we have forgotten it. The church was built in 1536, almost a hundred years before our Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth Rock. After Coronado sallied out from Compostela in his long search for Cibola and its golden cities, Compostela became the capital from which all of the discovered lands were governed. So it is only truth to say that Compostela was the first capital of the land that was to be the United States. From this sleepy old town there went forth edicts and orders carried by couriers and messengers up through the lonely jungles, on through the mountain passes through the country of the hostile Indians.

At one time there was a government place—a palacio and a fortress for the soldiers. But it has been so completely ruined and effaced by Time that we could not be sure even of its location. The grandeur

of Compostela did not last long. The bishop who founded the church, as the then farthest outpost of the Cross, never saw the church. He died before it was finished. The bishop who took his place died shortly after taking up his residence in Compostela. The third bishop was bored to tears by life in the sleepy, crude little garrison town and moved the seat of his authority to Guadalajara.

I have seen the old cathedral many times, but I never see it as it stands. To me it is always peopled by ghosts. I always see cavalcades of Spanish soldiers in the street, their rough barb war-horses pawing and champing at the big bits; men-at-arms in their lather armor made of seven thicknesses of deerskin, with their huge bell-muzzled muskets, their lances and their great swords; the packhorses and mules, with the muleteers endlessly tightening the cinch straps and rearranging the packs; the half-naked Indian allies looking on in wonderment; the chargers of the knights in armor held by the servants. And always from the dim recesses of the cathedral the solemn chants of the last Mass. And presently, in my mind's eye, I see the great studded front door swing open and knights come stumping out in their armor to their horses. One horse is more splendid than the others, a long, sweeping saddle-cloth of gold and scarlet falling almost to his nervous, stamping hoofs—Coronado's war-horse.

At the head of the company of knights strides a handsome young man in armor—Coronado. History tells us that he was a gay young society blade of a powerful and influential family. When he started on this romantic quest, most of the knights who went with him were careless young aristocrats, out for a lark. Malicious gossip, perhaps, but tradition says that they threw away most of their armor the first day out because it got too heavy. In the first fight at Zuñi, two of the horsemen are said to have been so panic-stricken they put their saddles on hindside to. But in their breasts beat brave fighting hearts. Many a time when Coronado wanted to turn back, they insisted on keeping on in the face of danger, hunger, suffering, and fatigue. Coronado's instructions from the Viceroy were specific. When he found the Seven Golden Cities of Cibola, he was to load up two wagons with gold. The Viceroy decided to be modest; just two wagonloads of gold would be enough.

The old church hasn't changed much in all these years. Someone who wanted to show his gratitude and piety has put up a hideous clock-tower of bright blue on the front; otherwise it is as Coronado saw it.

The first time I saw the cathedral was during the period when priests were in exile from Mexico and the Mexicans were holding services of their own. It was some kind of day of celebration. An old woman was leading the chants and litanies in a high, strident voice and the others joined in. All the women were on their knees on the cold stones. Some of them had come in from miles out in the country—on their knees every step of the way. As they came into the church, they prayed; then crawled a few inches nearer on their knees toward the altar. Near the altar was a group of young girls with crowns of thorns pressed down upon their foreheads. At one side was a large glass coffin in which there was a wax figure of Jesus Christ, His body bloody and torn as it came from the Cross.

At the rear of the church was a middle-aged peon in white cotton drawers and shirt who was showing his little son how to tell the beads of his rosary as he prayed. At the end of the lesson, the child bowed respectfully and kissed his father's hand. For a moment it puzzled me; then I understood. It was a custom reaching back to days of chivalry. He was kissing the sword-hilt of the ruler of his House.

When I returned to California, I asked Mr. Ramon Navarro, the Mexican movie actor, about it. He was surprised that I should heve been surprised. 'Why, certainly,' he said. 'I have never left my house in my life without kissing my father's hand.'

On the outside of the church is a cross carved into the stone. It stands at the height of a man's heart. All around the cross the stone is pock-marked by little holes. You know what that signified: bullets. No one knows how many men have been executed standing in front of that cross.

As we left the old church and walked through the sleepy streets of the adobe town, there came to our ears a queer, squealing noise, punctuated by the beat-beat-beat of a tom-tom. We started to investigate.

In an adobe house we found an impressive sight. The town butcher had got himself all-dressed-up in his best sombrero and his tightest leather pants. He had ridden his horse right into the house and was sitting in the saddle, trying to look like Napoleon at the battle of Austerlitz, or something. As he sat in silent grandeur, two little Indians played in his honor. One had a native pipe that looked something like a crude piccolo the other had a tom-tom.

A curious custom all through this part of Mexico is to hire bands to play in one's honor. If you have done something of which you feel very proud or have a birthday or something, you hire a band and have it follow you around the streets tooting tunes by way of hurrahs.

I don't know what the town butcher had that he was so proud of, but he had been sitting there for a long time on his horse like a statue, his face pulled into a very haughty and proud expression. When he saw us, he beckoned us to come in. There was a long and excited conversation between the Indian musicians, which we could not understand, as it was in some native dialect. Then the one who played the flute stood up and bowed and said, 'We will now play in honor of the Gringos. We shall play the national anthem of their great country—the United States.'

And then they solemny proceeded to play what they thought was our national anthem.

It was 'Oh, Katarina'!

Testament

By Max Press

TO live with dignity, to meet your fate:
With the wry, the wan, the ironic smile;
Enduring bravely what you cannot help,
Fighting, brave till the end, for what you can;
Does not this give a meaning to your life,
Is not this the sure road by which you come
To stand with Wisdom on the clear, clean heights—
And face the wind, the lightning and the rain?



"The Round-Up." Oil. By Ernesto Icaza Sanchez.

Ernesto Icaza Sánchez

By Fernando Gamboa

THE National Museum of Plastic Arts is presenting at this time in its "Sala de Estampa" a collection of pictures in oil by the late Mexican painter Ernesto Icaza Sánchez. This being the first public exhibit of this painter's work, it is necessary to comment on it briefly and thus explain why it is being shown in these salons.

Icaza, a self-taught artist, was born in Mexico City in 1866 and reached his flourishing period between 1900 and 1930. He lent his painting the purity of boundless good faith, nourished in the scenes and customs of the Mexican countryside, especially those which deal with the virile sport of charro horsemanship. He produced an abundant work, wherefrom in the course of several months' research it has been possible to localize and classify no less than three hundred pictures; though it has been established that he produced close to a thousand.

With his formation which is devoid of academism and with his deep Mexican feeling, Icaza, a delightful primitivist, apparently endeavoured to achieve a natural expression. Amid scenes abounding in colorfulness he accomplished a work of absolute sincerity and replete with minutiae, which even if his closest contemporaries appreciated solely for its representational vitality and for his profound knowledge of his theme, must be appreciated today for the indubitable pictorial value it contains.

Icaza was fascinated with the beauty of Mexican horsemanship. He applied every sensitive fiber of his being to the capture, unraveling and depiction of its different aspects, to such incidents as those of roping, saddling and taming of colts. The expressive titles of his pictures—"Taming a Mare," "The Trough," "Tail-throwing," "Lassoing Riders," "Hind-foot Lasso," "Branding," "Bronco-busting," and so on—reveal the thorough knowledge he had of this national sport.

On the other hand, one of the outstanding plastic virtues of his work is revealed in the sense of composition and movement he impressed in his forms. Life and action breathe in them always, but his admirable structure makes one doubt if the painter had been guided solely by intuition and suspect that he had somewhere acquired the knowledge of fundamental rules. At any rate, this artist, identified with the rich and spontaneous aesthetic tradition which vibrates among our people, has integrated himself with the best modalities of our plastic history, wherein a powerful sense of balance and movement are always predominant.

For the backgrounds of his pictures Icaza made use of the grand landscape themes, absorbed by him in his contemplative and acutely observant zeal, which comprise either sweeping distances or simple villages or haciendas. Probably without being aware of the importance his work implied, Icaza painted tirelessly so as to bequeath us an excellent documentary and artistic legacy of a Mexico which is destined to disappear very soon. It is due to this reason that the



"Forefoot Lasso." Oil.
By Ernesto Icaza Sanchez.



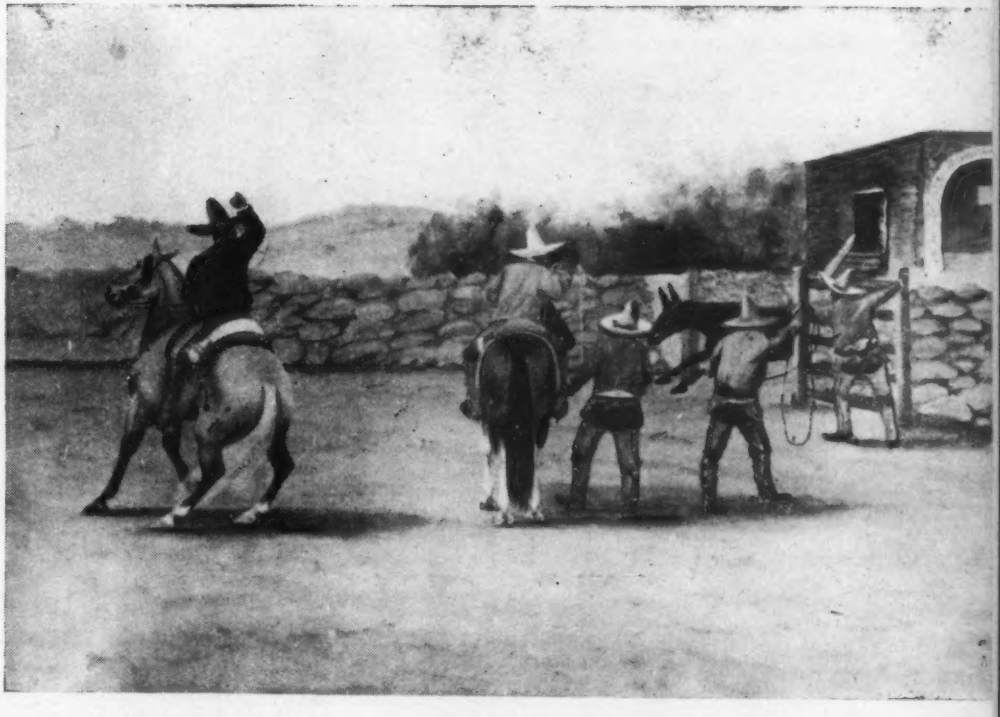
"Roping a Colt." Oil.
By Ernesto Icaza Sanchez.



"Bronco-busting." Oil.
By Ernesto Icaza Sanchez.



"Roping a Steer." Oil.
By Ernesto Icaza Sanchez.



"Taming a Mule Colt." Oil.
By Ernesto Icaza Sanchez.



"Branding." Oil.
By Ernesto Icaza Sanchez.

Museum, fully appreciating his twofold mission, offers its homage to his personality and work in the form of a public exhibition.

It regards the Sala de Estampa as an appropriate setting for the show of this work because of various reasons: mainly the dimensions of the paintings and the pulchritude, the patience and the painstaking minutiae of their execution, all of which in one way or another bear a relation to the prints that are usually exhibited in this Salon. The traditional factor has been also taken in account, for if prints emerge from the depths of Mexico's creative spirit, the same can be said for the paintings of Icaza, because they spring from authentically popular roots.

We must see in our painter another trace of that Mexican spiritual plenitude which can transform into a work of art anything that can arouse our perception.



"In a Tangle." Oil.
By Ernesto Icaza Sanchez.



"Ranch Scene." Oil.
By Ernesto Icaza Sanchez.

Un Poco de Todo

PICTURE OF PRE-COLUMBIAN MEXICO

PRE-COLUMBIAN civilization of Mexico is older than historians and archaelologists have thought. Such is the conclusion reached after a long study by Dr. Sherburne F. Cook, Professor of Physiology at the University of California.

Dr. Cook estimates that primitive tribes began intensive cultivation of the soil of Mexico 3,000 to 5,000 years ago, but most anthropologists believe that there were no agricultural communities in Mexico until about 2,000 years ago. The primitive population of Mexico was so large and cultivation so intensive that the cycle of erosion and deposition had almost exhausted the land before the Spaniards arrived.

"Spanish agriculture, deforestation and livestock grazing merely finished what the red man had already nearly carried to completion," says Dr. Cook.

All this contradicts the widely accepted view that Central Mexico before the conquest supported a relatively small population; that the agricultural practices of the natives, who used only digging sticks, resulted in little erosion; and that the major devastation of the countryside was accomplished by Spanish plows.

Dr. Cook reads the story of this devastation and of its ancient origin in the land itself. A correlation of analyses of soil strata in many areas of Mexico, historical data that attest to the age of barrancas (gullies) formed in areas of ancient erosion, and new estimates of the size of the primitive population constitute his evidence.

He found typical agricultural erosion and silt deposits laid down over artifacts and the floors of primitive houses and temples. Over the silt were layers of hardpan, then still more silt deposits and barrancas. In Dr. Cook's opinion, all this could not have happened in less than 3,000 to 5,000 years.

Dr. Cook is supported by a separate study which he made with Dr. Lesley B. Simpson and which indicates that there was a large population in Mexico before the Conquest.

In 1519, in Quiroga and Tzintzuntzan, an area of fifty-four square miles near Lake Patzcuaro, the estimated population density was 1,754 per square mile; in 1940 the density was 259 a square mile. While this was the most densely populated area, there were a number of areas with a density of about 500 per square mile. For comparison, the most densely populated state in the United States in 1940 was Rhode Island, with 674 persons per square mile.

Dr. Cook found that the areas with the greatest ancient erosion were those which before the Conquest had supported the largest populations. The support of such large populations would have required intensive cultivation and would account for the severe erosion.

CARIBBEAN SQUALLS

The Organization of American States was established at Bogotá. Colombia, in 1948. The twenty-one Western Hemisphere nations who belong to the O. A. S. are pledged to submit to it all disputes that arise between them. Last month the O. A. S. had before it a report on a series of disputes that have troubled the Caribbean area for the past three years.

A storm center of the Caribbean is Rafael L. Trujillo Molina, dictator of the Dominican Republic, which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti. There is a long history of discord between the two countries. It is heightened by racial tensions: Haiti is the only Negro republic in the Hemispehere, while the Dominican Republic is predominantly white, and General Trujillo is an exponent of white supremacy. Some disaffected Haitian politicians have gone to the republic, from where they keep up pamphlet and radio attacks on the Haitian Government.

General Trujillo, on the other hand, has many enemies—Dominican exiles and other political figures scattered in the Caribbean lands. In recent years the anti-Trujillo forces, supported by professional revolutionaries and gun-runners, have been concentrated in two countries. Cuba and Guatemala.

Last January Haiti filed a complaint with the O. A. S. It charged that General Trujillo's Government had supported a plot by Haitian exiles to invade Haiti and overthrow its Government. The Dominican Republic countered with a charge that Haiti, Cuba and Guatemala had baen abetting attempts to overthrow General Trujillo. The O.A.S. appointed a fivenation committee, which spent three weeks in the Caribbean on a factfinding tour. Last month the committee turned in its report. It found that (1) High Dominican officials, including a close friend of General Trujillo, "not only tolerated * * * but aided" the conspiracy against Haiti. (2) Officials of Cuba and Guatemala had supported several attempted invasions of the Dominican Republic. (3) The Dominican Republic, Cuba and Guatemala had thus failed to honor inter-American agreements not to foment revolution. (4) Haiti was not at fault.

The O. A. S. is to consider the report on April 3. The most it is to ask the guilty Governments to cease all aid to revolutionary groups, and warn that sanctions could be imposed if the request were ignored.

MASTER OF HIS FATE

Man has reached the point in his evolution where he has the power to decide whether or not he will follow the dinosaur into extinction. If he should become extinct, it is doubtful whether his like would be again evolved. So says Dr. George Gaylord Simpson, noted paleontologist, who traces man's past, present and future on this two-billion-year-old planet of ours.

"Man broadly manipulates the environment," according to Dr. Simpson, "and is learning how to do so more and more. He knows that evolution occurs and is fast learning exactly how it works. He is rapidly coming to hold the power of life and death. He has casually caused the extinction of numerous other sorts of organisms and seems likely to devise means for causing extinction at will.

"This awesome power includes the human prerogative of self-extinction. * * * Man is probably quite capable of wiping himself out, or if he has not quite achieved the possibility as yet, he is making rapid progress in that direction."

Whether man's future turns out to be good or bad depends on him alone. "Man has choice and responsibility," says Dr. Simpson, "and in this matter, too, he must choose and he cannot place responsibility for rightness or wrongness on God or on nature."

Continued on page 53

Literary Appraisals

FREDERICK CATHERWOOD ARCHt. By Victor Wolfgang von Hagen. Introduction by Aldous Huxley. Illustrations from Drawings by Frederick Catherwood. 177 pp. New York: Oxford University Press.

THE path to Catherwood leads through John Lloyd Stephens. Stephens went to Central America as United States envoy to Guatemala in 1839—a time of conflict, when the Government was in hiding. His none too diligent search for it gave him a chance to explore the ruins of the interior, and his subsequent book, "Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatán," Edgar Allan Poe called "perhaps the most interesting book of travel ever published."

A considerable part of the charm of "Incidents" could be attributed to the eighty engravings of Maya monuments by an artist who signed himself "F. Catherwood, Arch't." When Victor Wolfgang von Hagen set out to do a book on Stephens he was haunted by the mysterious illustrator of whom nothing else was known; after his biography had appeared in 1947, Mr. von Hagen could take time to lay the Catherwood ghost.

The result is a model of research. Von Hagen has compelled parish registers, letters, newspapers, exhibition catalogues, memoirs and other sources to yield the personal history of this mysterious Catherwood. At the tip of his pen takes shape an expert darftsman, a promoter dogged by unusually bad luck, a lonely, reticent human being, and an overlooked key figure in the archeology of the Americas.

Born in London in 1799 and trained as an architect, Catherwood early developed the itching foot. He traveled and sketched in Italy, Greece and the Holy Land; in Egypt he accompanied the Robert Hay expedition, and in Jerusalem he made the first complete drawings of the Mosque of Omar. In London, in 1836, he met Stephens; for both men, as for American archeology, it was a fateful encounter, and later that year Catherwood was in New York. As a speculation, he opened a Panorama, an art form then popular in England, at Broadway and Prince Streets.

The Panorama was immediately successful, and in 1839 Catherwood could leave it and join Stephens in his boisterous adventures in Central America. They returned in 1840, Stephens with his book and Catherwood with the illustrations for it.

In 1841 they went again, but a few days after their return the Panorama was burned, and with it most of the drawings and specimens from the second expedition. From the few drawings and notebooks that survived Catherwood contrived the illustrations for the new Stephens book "Incidents of Travel in Yucatan."

In 1844 Catherwood published a folio of drawings under the title "Views of Ancient Monuments in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan." This brought him fame; after his long experience in both Eeast and West, no one was as qualified to speak of comparative archeology: he exploded the then current theories of Maya cultural derivation from the Egyptian, and, whereas prominent scholars called the Maya monuments antediluvian, Catherwood coolly assigned them a maximum age of 800 to 1,000 years.

In 1845 the railroad age was at hand and Catherwood started a new career as a civil engineer. He surveyed a railway in British Guiana and started construction, but the work went slowly and at dreadful expense. Malaria, termites, bogs, and poor diplomacy imperiled the line. Cotherwood had to import workers from Jamaica, and then, "boged down," says Mr. von Hagen, "by floods, flies, and floosies," had to import women for their recreation.

Sick and discouraged, he retreated to Panama and then on to California, where he regained his health, his enthusiasm, and his professional standing. In 1852 he returned to England to wind up his affairs and in 1854 he started back, only to be lost in the sinking of the Arctic.

Mr. Von Hagen writes agreeably, if you are willing to submit to his style. Even with Oxford Press editing, his commas bear no relation to the rules you and I learned in school; he is unconcerned with the minutiae of spelling; and he has evolved a literary device of his own, which one might term the disruptive parenthetic, one sample of which must suffice: "This time Catherwood resolved that he would publish and not allow, as in the case of his Mosque of Omar drawings, his Maya work to be usurped by others."

Even if such things bother you, Mr. von Hagen has provided compensations. For the biographer, here is a model of biographical research. For the antiquarian, here is more than a hint that if Stephens was the father of Maya archeology, Catherwood stood in even closer relations to it.

J. J.

PATTERNS AND CEREMONIALS OF THE INDIANS OF THE SOUTHWEST. With over 100 Lithographs and Drawings by Ira. Moskowitz. Text by John Collier. Introduction by John Sloan. 192 pp. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.

TO these skillful drawings and lithographs, John Collier contributes a text that describes the culture of the Southwest Indians as an example for our own materialistic civilization. John Sloan provides an introduction in which he says that the Indians' attitude toward art is traditionally nobler than ours.

Both contributors approach their subject with marked enthusiasm. Mr. Sloan remarks that "the first times I saw the Santo Domingo Corn Dance I felt the same strong emotion from the rhythm of the drums and primitive intensity of that ageold dance ritual that I experienced when I saw Isadora Duncan fill the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House with her great personality."

Miss Duncan may have known better than to say to Mr. Sloan, as she said to me years ago, that "no great art can grow in America, for the reason that no country breeds an art which has not been indigenous to its soil, and America's noise and dance-hops and bright lights are only the natural outcome of the tom-toms, crude hoppings and tinsel adornments of its Indians."

Mr. Collier's reaction toward this heresy would have been scathing, since he states that, "as old as mankind on our earth, * * * classic as Shakespeare almost never is, but as the Greek drama was * * * the sacred drama, at the core of Pueblo life, is a personality-forming, an aducative institution, possibly without rival in the world of today."

It is interesting to find Mr. Collier—a former Commissioner of Indian Affairs—making an interpretation of that culture closely akin to D. H. Lawrence's. Mr. Collier sees the spirit of the Indians blending the "twin eternities" of past and future.

Lawrence said: "Our immortality is not in the original eternity, neither in the ultimate eternity. God is the utter relation between the two eternities." One wonders in which man the conception arose first. Mr. Collier traces it back to Ceylon. Lawrence had recently come from Ceylon when he began interpreting our Indians to us.

Both men find that, after all, Atlantis is not lost —Collier perceiving, in the present text, that "these mountain heights of the sunken social continent still lift their pinnacles and domes in living air." And both men appear to be convinced that the best service later American civilization could give the world would be to let our ways go by and save the ways of the Indians of the Southwest.

Such rhapsodic faith as Mr. Collier's and Lawrence's is characteristic of converts. A Roman Catholic priest said to me once of Henry Harland, a convert: "He is more Catholic than he needs to be." And a Santo Domingo Indian confided, with an indulgent smile, as to Mary Austin: "She tells us what we believe—and we always say yes."

It is a stimulus, though, to encounter such fervor as Mr. Collier's, accompanying such drawings and lithographs as these by Ira Moskowitz, which are the body of the book. Mr. Moskowitz, living among Indians—Pueblo, Hopi, Navajo, Apache—made many straight-seen drawings of tribal types; and in his impressive lithographs, especially those depicting ceremonies where human figures combine with elemental background of earth, sky or fire, he has caught not static or merely decorative grouping but the very motion of Indian life infused with the flow of the natural world. To paraphrase Lawrence, one feels the drum-beat living in the stone.

Mr. Sloan's introduction concludes that this "work of a real artist, in a technique familiar to our European-trained minds, should do much to awaken our understanding of the Indian people."

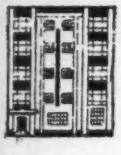
W. B

POPOL VUH. The Sacred Book of the Ancient Quiche Maya. English Version by Delia Goetz and Sylvanus G. Morley from the Spanish translation by Adrian Recinos. 267 pp. Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press.

THE story of the Spanish Conquest is doubly documented: first there are accounts by Spanish soldiers and priests; second, there are compiled traditions and ancient papers of the Indian nations with contents that cry like blood from the ground. The "Popol Vuh" is one of these.

This book of the Quiché Maya of Guatemala restates the creation of the world, the triumph of light over darkness through the agency of culture heroes. There is chronology, too, and a list of theocratic kings

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from Toltec times to the coming of Alvarado. Of the final kings we read in Pedro de Alvarado's letter to Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire:

"And I knew them to have such a bad will towards service to His Majesty, and for the good and peace of this land, I burned them and ordered the city burned and levelled to the ground."

The people of Utatlán who survived the scourge of the Sun God, as Alvarado was called because of his yellow hair, settled in Chuilá, later given the Spanish-Aztec name Santo Tomás Chichicastenango. There they were Christianized, but not before some educated Quiché had put to paper, in Latin letters, the "Popol Vuh." This peoples' treasury talks in parables:

There was no sun yet. Nevertheless, there was a being called Vucub-Caquix who was very proud of himself.

The sky and the earth existed, but the faces of the sun and the moon were covered.

And he said: "Truly, they are clear examples of those people who were drowned, and their nature is that of supernatural beings."

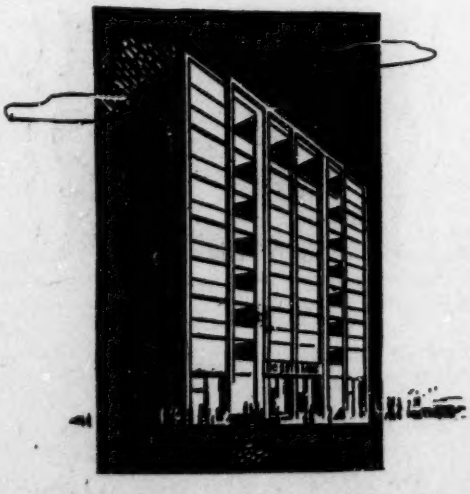
"I shall now be great above all the beings created and formed. I am the sun, the light, the moon," he exclaimed. "Great is my splendor. Because of me men can walk and conquer. For my eyes are of silver, bright, resplendent as precious stones, as emeralds; * * *

"So, then, I am the sun, I am the moon, for all mankind. So shall it be, because I can see very far."

So Vucub-Caquix spoke. But he was not really the sun; he was only vainglorious of his feathers and his riches. And he could see only as far as the horizon, and he could not see over all the world * * *

His only ambition was to exalt himself and to dominate. And all this happened when the flood came because of the wooden people.

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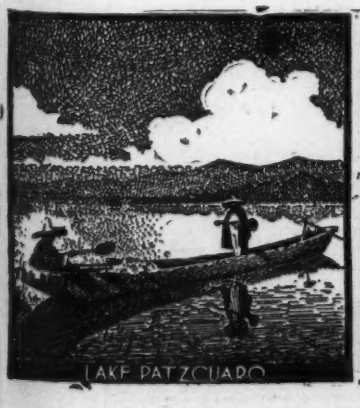
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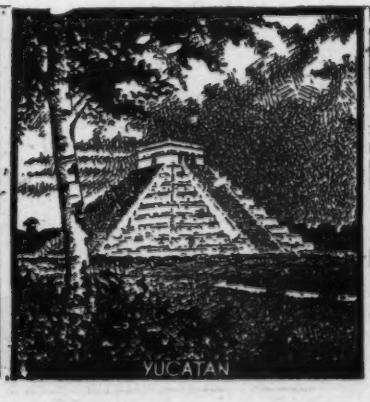
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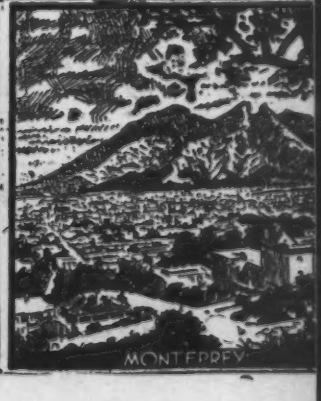
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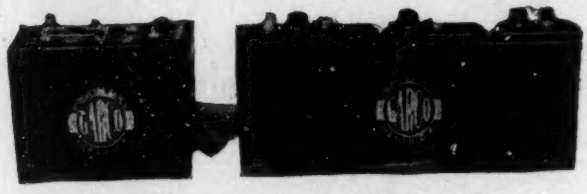

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YUCATAN

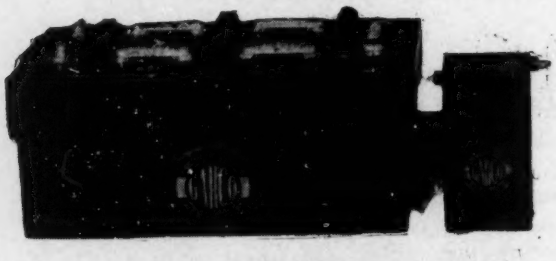

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About 1700 A. D. the "Popol Vuh" fell into the hands of the Dominican, Francisco Ximénez, who fortunately copied the original Quiché text, while making translations of it into Spanish to incorporate into his stuffy histories.

The copy at last caught the attention of Carl Scherzer, who published it in German in 1857. In 1861 Brasseur de Bourbourg followed suit with a French edition. Since then the "Popol Vuh" has been published many times in the Latin countries, and now for the first time has been translated into English. Why not? It is superbly literary.

H. J. S.

RUN SHEEP RUN. By Gordon Sager. 300 pp. New York: The Vanguard Press.

IN his first novel, Gordon Sager takes the expatriate theme into a West Indies setting. A static picture of degeneration, "Run Sheep Run" lacks emotional impact because the author is more concerned with psychological and sociological analyses than with the creation of characters. This, one need not add, is a stumbling-block that has upset more than one first-class talent.

Mr. Sager's story concerns ten people who have run away from the responsibilities of society to the island of Nunca-nunca. But the ten are important only as instruments to make Mr. Sager's protest against the society that caused them to run away. Because the author has no sympathy for his characters, the reader can have none. Though "Run Sheep Run" is written in language that is at times clinical, at times pointlessly obscene, Mr. Sager's style can be vivid and dramatic. He knows how to create atmosphere, how to stage a climax, how to tell a story. The trouble is that "Run Sheep Run" adds up only to a deep contempt for life and the dignity of man. It's really a pity that the author seems unable, or unwilling, to rise above the clinical and the phonographic—or to risk a touch of humanity here and there, if only to vary his stylized pattern.



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SYMPHONY

By Vane C. Dalton

WHEN back in 1942 Erich Kleiber—an illustrious exile from the barbarism which prevailed in his native land—came to Mexico, it was due to his prestige and initiative that a new symphony ensemble was formed in this city. Under his baton this ensemble, known as the Philharmonic Orchestra, offered a memorable season of concerts, and led by other visiting conductors has functioned in a somewhat sporadic fashion ever since.

During its initial years, while the Mexican Symphony Orchestra still presented its annual seasons of concerts, this orchestra filled a secondary or a supplementary role. During the last two years, however, or since the Mexican Symphony Orchestra was disbanded, it has come to occupy a position which despite its inherent instability must be regarded as primary. It is largely due to the occasional performances of this orchestra that a popular interest in symphony music has been kept alive in this city.

Lacking a permanent director and operating on an entirely self-sustaining basis, this orchestra has kept alive mainly because of the sustained enthusiasm of its components, who, incidently, comprise the most competent group of local musicians.

Determined to keep it alive and to lift it from its precarious position, the members of this orchestra subjected it to a complete reorganization at the beginning of this year. Modifying its name to that of Philharmonic Orchestra of Mexico City, its recently appointed administrating board has obtained economic aid from official and private sources which will enable it to resume its activities with a season of ten concerts which will be given at the Teatro Palacio Chino.

Beginning on the 26th of April the season will conclude on June 25th. Arthur Rodzinski, Sergiu Celibidache and Rafael Kubelik are the three renowned guest conductors who will direct the season's programs. The distinguished soloists who will perform with the orchestra are: Irma Gonzalez, Nathan Milstein, Isaac Stern, William Kapell, Claudio Arrau and Pierre Fournier.

The forthcoming season is undoubtedly the most significant development in our musical realm in a period of years.

DRAMA

SWAGGERING a new coat of paint the old Teatro Ideal opened its doors to the public this month, offering a brand-new play and a brand-new company. The company is headed by Armando Calvo, a distinguished actor of the cinema screen, and the play, titled "Empire State, is the work of Lino Landy, a Spanish author who is residing in Mexico.

Attracted by its promising title and by an abiding hope that something truly new and worthwhile might yet develop on our languishing dramatic stage, I attended the play on its opening night. I was quite curious to see what kind of a vehicle a Spanish play-





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wright might evolve with American characters, a new York locale and the world's tallest building as a background. I discovered that this building, providing the play's title and projected over the backdrop throughout its length, has no direct relationship with the plot, and is probably intended to serve as a symbol of something which my imagination, I am sorry to confess, failed to grasp. For, obviously, if the Empire State building is meant to symbolize New York, it defines in its gigantic proportions the elements of strength, ambition, achievement. Señor Landy's play, however, stresses the opposite elements, or those of moral weakness, emotional instability and sexual perversion. Could it be possible that the author used this skyscraper as a symbol for the Tower of Babel?

Whichever the case, attracted by the title I went to see the play thinking that it might deal with some aspect of New York reality. What I saw is something that does not deal with New York reality, or indeed with any other kind of reality my imagination can summon. The author, it seems to me, having probably seen "A Streetcar Named Desire," undertook to write a play in the modern, brutally realistic manner of Tennessee Williams, exploting what the Mexicans would call "un asunto escabroso," yet making amends for the shock it might cause by giving it a suitably happy ending. What he actually achieved, however, is an inept simulation of realism, which is another way of saying clumsy artificiality.

Take a look at the plot: A young and handsome foreign painter (the program describes him as a displaced person with a transit visa and a message in



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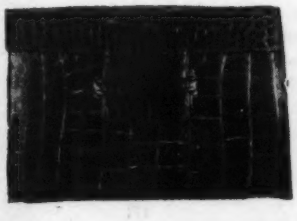
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(IN THE REAR)

colors for the mad) lands in New York. Almost immediately he falls into the eager hands of three luscious and decidedly footloose females; or, to be more exact, they fall into his. It must be pointed out that at least two of the three had not been entirely "she-women" up to the time he appears on the scene, but, as the author quite clearly brings out, it is his fatal masculine attractiveness that saves them from homosexual dereliction and restores them to normalcy. With a trio of obliging playmates on his hands the young lad soon finds himself in the thick of a battle royal, for neither of the three is willing to share him with the other two.

One would imagine that the young hero would never be able to extricate himself from this kind of a mess; but the resourceful author finds a way out. He eliminates one of the females by way of suicide. Another, obviously the most deserving of the three, becoming pregnant, suddenly arouses in the wayward fellow fatherly longings and gets him in the end. The third one is simply ditched somewhere along the wayside. Need one add that the plot is fittingly rounded out by the lad's clamorous artistic triumph when his paintings are shown at one of New York's leading galleries?

This, roughly, is the story of "Empire State." But what, we must ask, are its implications? What is the author's viewpoint? What has he actually sought to convey in the unwritten margins? I confess that I am totally unable to provide an answer. We all know that the only way an author can overcome the set limitations of a theatrical stage is by imbuing his play with a wider significance than that projected by the plot or spoken lines. A good play, in other words, is the kind that projects within its limited scope a much wider implicit realm.



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I have a feeling that Señor Landy, being a serious writer, pursued this goal in "Empire State." I am sure that he was not bent on contriving mere entertainment. He wrote the play for an adult audience, and sought thereby to broadcast a message. But whatever this message, it apparently got lost in delivery. Striving for stark and brutal realism, since the plot involves painters, he probably achieved surrealism; though I am afraid that a dish of mondongo, whose chief ingredient as most of us know is tripe, might be the best way to describe this opus.

In the face of it all, the unusually fine performance of the cast—Martha Roth, Celia Manzano, Sara Guasch and Armando Calvo—deserves the highest praise. The presence in our midst of such capable actors renews my hope that if someone should ever actually write a worthwhile play a revival might yet take place on our dramatic boards.

Friday in Toluca . . .

Continued from page 12

thank you. That was his way. His life and his breath.

At three o'clock, the rusty bell striking from the old market church announced that the market day was done. We pushed our way out against the now swirling tides of Indians and their animals. Seldom elsewhere will one find such patient animals and humans; dogs, pigs, burros, babies, squatting mothers and bent men bearing inhuman burdern. We bought fifteen native cigarettes, wrapped in cornhusks instead of rice paper, for the equivalent of two American cents, and moved out with the tide.

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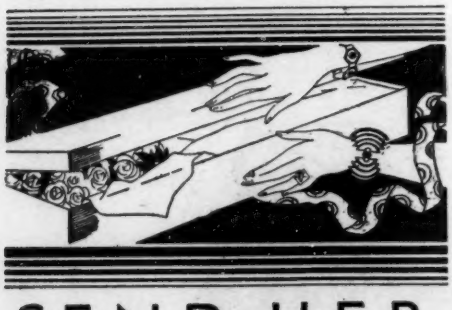
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Art and Personal Notes

SIXTEEN paintings in oil by Gustavo Montaya are being shown at this time by the Galeria de Arte Mexicano (Calle de Milan No. 18). Devoting himself in the past largely to potraiture, Montoya emerges in this exposition as a genre painter of notable gifts. The streets and plazas along the older sections of Mexico City provide the backgrounds for typical scenes, usually dense with crowds on some festive occasion.

There are also some canvases—such as the one projecting a lonely silhouette of a woman fruit vendor, whose wares lend a shap note of color in the grey midst of an almost deserted street—that accent the atmosphere of the place rather than its objective substance.

In none of his work Montoya falls into mere picturesqueness. In recreating typical scenes he evolves images where people, pavements and buildings, backgrounds mellowed by a patina of centuries, are blended into designs of veritable charm.

GALERIA ARTE MODERNO (Plaza Santos Degollado No. 16—C), which adheres to the policy of alternating its exhibits of works by Mexican painters with those by distinguished foreigners, is currently showing a group of compositions in oil by the American abstractionist Netter Worthington. The exhibited works were painted in Guadalajara, where the artist makes his home.

THE newest works by Carlos Ruano Llopis, the Spanish master whose depictions of bull ring scenes have a widespread fame, are being shown at this time by the Circulo de Bellas Artes (Avenida Juárez No. 58). Ringside sketches, studies, portraits of noted toreros and Spanish genre scenes comprise this colorful exhibit.

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THE Sala Verde of the Palacio de Bellas is offering this month a voluminous group of paintings by Waldemar Sjoelander, a Swedish artist who is at present residing in Mexico.

A QUITE novel art exhibit is open to the public at this time in the foyer of Teatro Ideal. Containing the highly varied works of twenty and some odd painters, Mexican and foreign, it was arranged in connection with the current presentation of a play at this theatre, titled "Empire State," by the Spanish author Lino Landi, which exploits the amorous and artistic adventures of several painters in New York.

The heterogeneous exhibit includes works by Raul Anguiano, Enrique Climent, Francisco Dosamantes, Enrique D'Aoust, Agustin Lazo, Juan Soriano and various other outstanding local painters.

IFTY splendid reproductions in color or modern art masterworks (from the Impressionists to date) are on view at the Galeria de Arte Popular "Cervantes" (Corner Heroes and Esmeralda).

DORIS ROSENTHAL, the noted American painter whose work is frequently reproduced in the pages of this magazine, returned to Mexico last month for a brief sketching journey to Yucatán, Veracruz and other points.

A MEMORIAL exposition of water colors by the Veracruz painter Gonzalo Argüelles Bringas may be seen in the course of this month at the Galerias Romano (Jose Ma. Marroquí No. 5). The collection, consisting of seventy-five paintings, includes landscapes, still life and studies, and belongs to the family of the artist who died eight years ago.



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Thomas Gage . . .

Continued from page 21

Soon after, he secured an interview with the Bishop of London at Fulham Palace, who ordered him to preach his recantation sermon at St. Paul's and to prove his sincerity to the world, he also entered into the state marriage (to which, he says, God gave his blessing). Shortly afterwards he obtained a Benefice from Parliament as Protestant preacher at Acris in the County of Kent, and this ends his story.

* * *

The question might arise whether Gage's visit to America had any political influence in the colonies. A number of Spanish historians speak of the Black Legend circulated during three centuries, attacking Spanish rule. This legend was first based on Bartolomé de las Casas' account of the cruelty towards Indians, written in 1542 and published ten years later. His book was translated into several languages, and contained illustrations showing the ill treatment of the natives. The same historians claim that, among others, Thomas Gage, contributed to the Black Legend, and that while Las Casas exaggerated his case out of pity for the Indians, Gage and others were moved only by political considerations. A reference to Thomas Gage is also found in a history of Mexico written by a Jesuit named Andrés Cavo in Rome in 1767 after the expulsion of the Jesuits from Mexico.

Cavo states that the commerce of New Spain and the Carribean Island began to decline about the year 1655 to the advantage of the English, French, and Dutch, which evil had its origin in the visit of an

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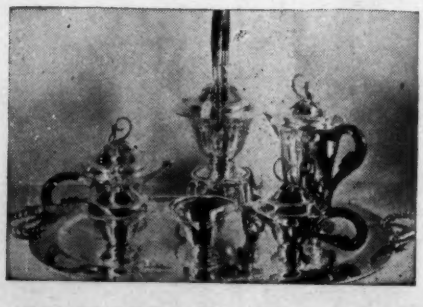
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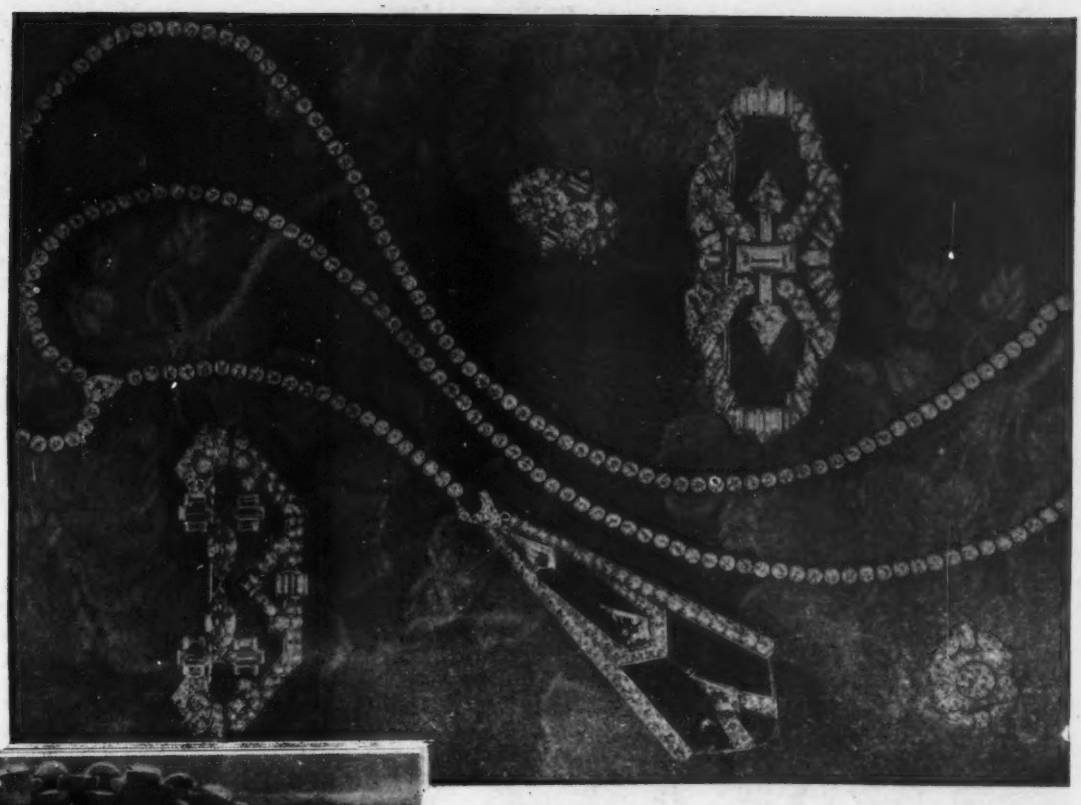
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Englishman, who spent many years in Mexico and Guatemala, the famous Thomas Gage. He says that Thomas Gage, on returning to England with the knowledge he had obtained of the weak Spanish defences, convinced Oliver Cromwell, that, with a strong fleet and a few soldiers, a New World could be conquered. Cromwell prepared a fleet of thirty men-of-war under the command of Admiral Penn and Colonel Venables, who, after a disastrous defeat at Santo Domingo, (for which they were afterwards thrown into the Tower) managed to capture the Island of Jamaica. The Spanish Governor of that island appealed for help to Santo Domingo, Cuba, and Mexico, and the Viceroy of Mexico, Alburquerque, sent troops in 1657 to recover Jamaica, but they were defeated, and a few years later Jamaica was ceded to England by the Spanish Crown.

It seems, therefore, that although Thomas Gage's name is hardly mentioned by English historians, the Spaniards do give him an important role in the dissolution of their American Empire.

Patterns of an Old City . . .

Continued from page 18

essentially quite human and that he had not been entirely immune from the usual problems which beset normal men. It was known that he did not marry in his youth, though he most likely would have had no trouble in finding a worthy mate, because he was profoundly devoted to his mother and sister, and having to provide for their needs was afraid to take on added responsibilities.

It was also known, as a piquant aside, that his unmarried state did not actually imply celibacy—that in his time he had had quite a few passing affairs, which culminated with a quite serious one with a woman by the name of Ofelia something, an experience which had probably further added to his oddity, had cracked him up a little bit more than he had been before. It seemed hardly credible to those who knew him that don Carlitos could ever succumb to a truly

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devastating emotion, for during the two crucial years his conduct at the office revealed hardly a trace of the torment he bore within. He managed to keep it safely hidden inside him while he followed his quotidian routine. Thus, while such things fed casual gossip, his hermetic reserve discouraged undue concern or pity. It is only, moreover, when people are young that a grand passion ennobles them in the eyes of others; when a man in his middle years yields to its ravages he becomes somewhat ridiculous.

* * *

And don Carlitos was indeed no longer young at the time. He was past forty, and though at the beginning he had hoped it would be merely another passing affair, there was something in this woman called Ofelia which released all his pent-up romantic longings, made him blind to her commonplaceness, acquiescent to her will, and for a time utterly helpless. His obsessed vision distorted her image. It disguised her grossness into supreme virtue and adorned her with all the superlative qualities of literature's great heroines. He imposed upon himself a blissful sightlessness; shielded himself within a grotesque dream from this anguish and pain and mortification, from the pathetic truth that he was a sorry victim of lowest deceit, that the woman he loved betrayed him with all sorts of men, and that he wasted on her his money, neglecting thereby the needs of his mother and sister.

There were times during those pathetic years when don Guillermo noted recurrent slips in his work and a more pronounced eccentricity in his conduct. But he dealt with him indulgently, for he was an old and thoroughly reliable employee—an "hombre de confianza"—whose undeniable merits he was sure more than amply made up for his defects. As he saw it, the whole trouble with don Carlitos reduced itself to the fact that he was simply a Quixote, and there

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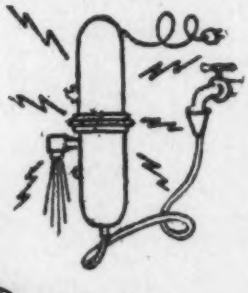
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was nothing one could do about it. He had been born that way, and he would die unchanged.

Don Guillermo was neither curious enough nor did he have sufficient intellectual enterprise to ever delve into the exact meaning of the term Quixote, or at least to probe his own meaning of this term. Though in employing it as a convenient label he probably had in mind the peculiar type of man who is congenitally incapable of coping with reality because he is irretrievably lost in a dream—a man, in other words, who exhausts his energies by taking absurdly trivial, often imaginary, hurdles, and invariably meets with tragic failure just when he seems close to his goal.

Most likely, however, don Guillermo had no such clear notion regarding this specific character. By this offhand designation he simply included his trusted employee among that class of men who, incidentally, are not uncommon in Mexico—the frustrated, Hamletic men of mediocre callings, burdened with the souls of poets, unable to accept their mediocrity, yet equally unable to lead heroic lives, anxious to satisfy their ego, yet endlessly plagued by their conscience And classing him thus, theoretically, he gave him a place in the world.

And for all its probable lack of final clarity, don Guillermo's offhand estimate basically rested on truth. He regarded his employee as a failure for the reason that during all the years he had labored at his desk, while growing from youth to late middle age, he refused to become mature. He remained a dreamer. Accepting him as such, he tolerantly conceded, however,—on such rare occasions when he added a few pesos to his monthly pay—that the sole measure of success don Carlitos had actually achieved through his existence was defined in his ability to preserve his dreams intact while consistently complying with his day-to-day duties.

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But there was a time in his employee's life, which was scarcely perceived by don Guillermo, when such compliance—when the preservation of his duality in function—became an almost impossible feat. That was during the years he lived with Ofelia. Preserving a hardly changed demeanour, he carried on with his task; though it was only because he was shielded by his dream that he was able to do it, or that he had survived at all these brutal years. It was the same hidden shield that sustained him through the crisis—perhaps the only veritable crisis he had ever experienced in his life—that came with his mother's death, and the sorrow and gnawing remorse it brought him; for he was convinced that it was caused by his neglect. In his deep bereavement he seemed at last to sense the impact of reality. He cast away his faithless mistress, had his grey suit died black, and moved back to the old dwelling in Tacuba which he shared with his sister.

But even this brief impact with reality did not destroy his dream. He had freed himself of Ofelia: physically she ceased to exist. But in his mind she underwent a strange metamorphosis. The evil she represented in reality became transformed into an image of perfection. In his thoughts and vision she stood before him on a lofty pedestal—she defined the pathos of a lost ideal, of something ineffably precious that he had grasped for a fleeting while, then lost for ever. His longing for Arcadia changed into a dream for a paradise lost.

He had cast Ofelia out of his life; he did not allow himself to mentally utter her name, and presently it was obliterated from his memory. Yet, under a variety of other names, or namelessly, she dwelled

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for ever in his unviolated sanctuary—she lived on as an image of perfection and played the salient role in the ornamental lines he wrote.

* * *

He felt thirsty as he rose from his desk, and pacing across the room filled a paper cup at the cooler. Suddenly he perceived that the office was completely deserted and almost dark. I 've put in quite a bit of overtime, he thought. But I 've got most of it done. I won't be so rushed the rest of the week. Carefully he put away his papers in a drawer of his desk, picked up his worn felt hat off the hanger, and tested the door as he closed it to make sure it was locked.

As he descended in the elevator and made his way down the crowded street to the corner where he boarded his camión, the words of the poem's final line repeatedly rang in his ears.

Un Poco de Todo . . .

Continued from page 33

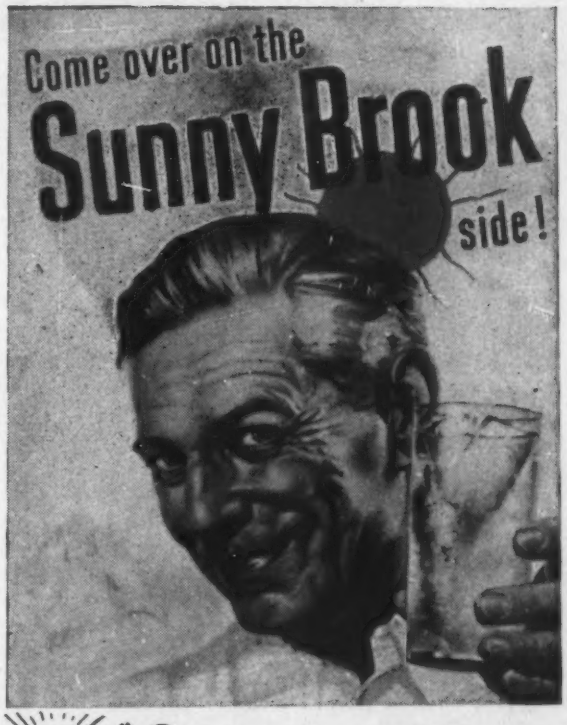
Dr. Simpson, who is Professor of Vertebrate Paleontology at Columbia University, reached these and other trenchant conclusions in the Terry lectures which he delivered at Yale and which are now published in book form under the title "The Meaning of Evolution."

Through the Great Pampa . . .

Continued from page 14

bined efforts of all four of us to drag the big beast into the panga. It measured fourteen feet long.

The natives said they received one peso per foot



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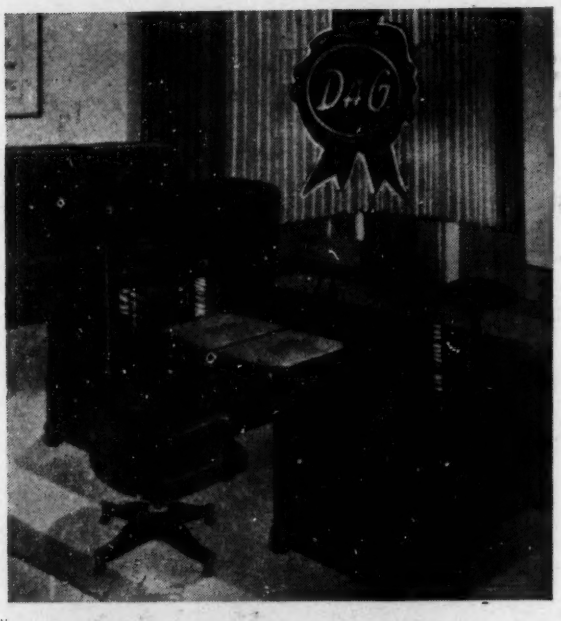

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for alligator hides. With the proceeds of their night's work they could now go on a glorious two weeks' vacation. True, they had just come from a vacation, they admitted; but they were again men of property, worth all of seven pesos each. Such men did not work. They attended fiestas, cockfights; drank tequila; perhaps visited with other men so fortunately situated; or just sat in the sun—and rested. Surely Fortune did not smile upon a man for the purpose of keeping his nose to the grindstone. They had heard, they said, of men who continued to slave after having accumulated a tidy sum—say ten pesos—but for themselves it seemed so useless, so avaricious. Two weeks was long enough to plan ahead. Quien sabe, who knows what tomorrow will bring? They fairly tore through the water, so anxious were they to return to Paredón and the sophisticated life open to a man with seven pesos.

We paddled back to the head of the channel, anchored the canoe in midstream, and settled down for the night. Several million assored gnats, mosquitoes, mosco cabezones, and jenjenes tried to settle with us. A veritable London pea-soup fog of insects—we hardly dared open our mouths to speak.

Long before daylight there were sounds of great activity round us. All the canoes were out in the water, their crews shrimping. The natives catch the shrimps by poling slowly along while a man on the bow throws his circular net. This net is about twelve feet in diameter, and is weighted with stones round the circumference. It is draped over the arm and thrown in such a way that when it strikes the water it spreads out in a perfect circle. The weights quickly carry it to the bottom, where it imprisons the shrimps. Then the fisherman closes the net and hauls it in by pulling with a jerking motion on lines which are threaded round the circumference and attached to the centre. They make these nets themselves, and



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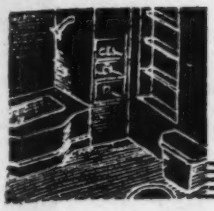
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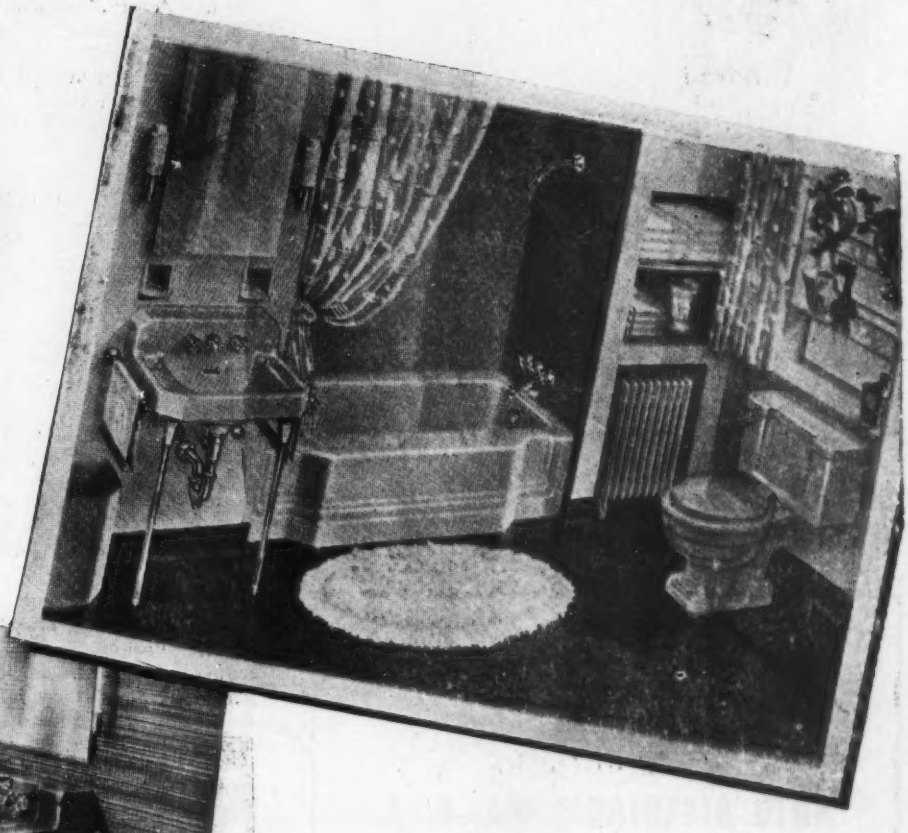
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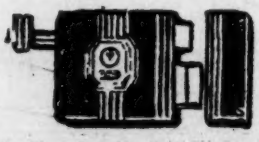


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it takes about there weeks to complete one. The canoes trevelled abreast of each other up and down the channel in groups of four or five, so that when the men cast their nets they covered the width of the water. Most of the canoes were propelled by youngsters, some of them not more than six years old.

* * *

At daylight we walked up to the village. The headman ran to meet us as we entered the clearing, and with "mucho gusto" ushered us into his house. His wife was busily preparing breakfast, "for you," she announced. Several old men gathered round. Pancho, the headman, all smiles, inquired how soon we wanted to start on the portage. I reminded him that we had not yet settled on the price. He waved away the thought of payment. "Oh, no," he said, "there will be no charge. I did not know last night that you were the Vagabundos. We are anxious to help you in any way we can."

We never knew the exact details of how this grapevine telegraph worked, but that the natives had some means of communicating with each other was frequently demonstrated.

Three o'clock was set as the time for our departure, for then the sun would be well past the meridian. The natives dislike travelling during the heat of the day.

This business settled, the old men plied us with questions about the lagoon country until the meal was ready. We sat down to a good breakfest of eggs cooked in chili sauce, shrimps, and gorditas. The gordita is a small, thick corn cake made from meal prepared as for tortillas, but about three inches in diameter and three-quarters of an inch thick. Nowhere else, except in parts of the lagoon country, did we see them.

This little village, we learned, was La Colonia. One legua away, on the Gulf of Tehuantepec was another village, Puerta Arista. While in Salina Cruz we had met a customs official who was to have charge of Puerta Arista, and who expected to have assumed his post by the time we arrived. We had promised to stop and see him, for our plans at that time

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were to sail down the coast. Since we had some hours to spend before three o'clock, we decided to pay him a visit.

Dressed in our white shore clothes, we started on the four-mile walk to the port. Puerta Arista consisted of a lighthouse and several thatched huts clustered together on a straight beach, where a very heavy surf broke. Why the place was ever called a port is one of the mysteries of Mexico. No boat could possibly land through the surf—even if the norther gave it a chance. There was no one in sight, so we went to the lighthouse and routed out the keeper, who was asleep in a hammock. He made us welcome and promised to go in search of our friend. He soon returned with Don Nancho in tow, who immediately welcomed us to Puerta Arista and invited us to his house.

The worthy Don said that he had long ago given us up, believing we had been lost at sea. When I informed him that we had come through the lagoons, he was highly incredulous, and questioned us closely about the country. "Caramba!" he exclaimed. "You actually came through the Mareño country?" He shook his head, and added the Spanish equivalent of "It just isn't done." "Why," said he, "when I was younger, I led an army through that country. I know it, and I know the Mareños. They will kill you for nothing. I do not understand how you could do it." Except for our knowledge of its geography, we should never have convinced him.

* * *

Don Nancho was sixty-five, and very young and active for his age. This—along with his successful marriage to a woman forty years his junior—he attributed to his lifelong habit of drinking curdled milk. This milk was prepared from a culture "of worms," which he said he had used for twenty-five years. I have no idea what Don Nancho's "worms" really were, but he swore by them. They were put in fresh milk and allowed to stand over night. The following day

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the milk was strained and drunk. The "worms," said he, would cure anything... restore the vigour of youth... he offered to lend me some of his culture... I would soon see for myself whether they were overrated or not... I hastily declined his kind offer. Then, Doña Felicia, his fat young wife, brought in his mid-morning tipple. He drank it down with great gusto, and a mighty smacking of his lips. Doña Felicia smiled broadly. Yes, she said, it was a remarkable antidote for the ravages of time.

After an excellent lunch of chicken mole, quite the best we had ever eaten, we started back up the dusty trail. Half-way we were met by a horseman, who said he had been sent to look for us, since Pancho was afraid that we might have lost our way.

The oxcarts were ready and waiting in the village. While loading the canoe, one of the men called my attention to a bullet hole in the stern. I called Ginger, pointing to the place just below the gunwale. "Oh," she gasped. "I was standing by the stern when they fired."

We said Adios, and started down the road. As we passed each house the family came running out and handed us gifts of food. They gave us yuca, bananas, plantains, coco-nuts, and breadstuffs. The cockpit was half full by the time we left the village. A hundred yards past the last house, we heard a child screaming. We turned round to see a little girl The carts went on ahead while we waited for her. Ginger picked her up, and with the tears streaming running towards us, waving her arms and yelling. led and nodded as we passed, and called out greetings down her dusty face sobbed, "I was so afraid you



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would go away before I could give you this." Clenched in one dirty little fist, was an egg!

The third portage passed without incident. Again we made our way along the intricate water ways that meandered in and out of mangrove thickets, swamps, and shallow lagoons. At a little village called Cabeza del Toro, friendly Indians guided us through a difficult maze to the next open water. This country was mapped on the charts as dry land. And after pushing the canoe for a distance of ten miles through barely wet mud, we were not disposed to quarrel with the map makers.

The second day out from La Colonia, we were cruising down a shallow estero, wondering when we would find enough water to bathe and to wash our muddy clothes in. This as the dry season, and all the tributary streams were dry, too. We were caked with mud from head to toe. On the estero we met two fishermen, who told us that at the base of the next hill ahead we would find a village.

We paddled on, hoping to find a place where we could clean up a bit before going on to the village. But within a short distance a canoe came to meet us, filled with men and women in their fiesta clothes. They were very cordial and insistent that we come at once to the village. Ginger protested that we were too dirty, and urged them to go on ahead. We would follow when we had made ourselves presentable.

"No, no," laughed a young fellow who had invited us to be his guests. "It is perfectly natural that you should be dirty after such a trip. You must come to our house. There you can bathe with fresh water and soap."

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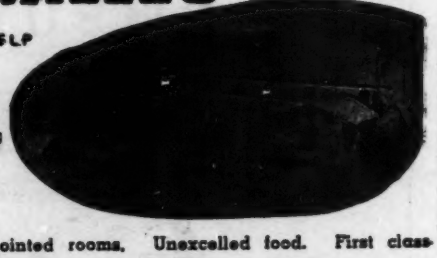
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We beamed at each other. "Fresh water and soap. "This would be the first luxury of the sort we had had since leaving Salina Cruz.

As we made our way up the estero we could see that this was not the poor, sandy country we had left. The sloping hills were covered with rich, cultivated fields of corn and cane, and groves of coconut palms, oranges, and bananas. Santa Rosa was also the largest settlement we had visited since leaving Salina Cruz. But unlike the usual Mexican village, it was not built round a central square or plaza; its two hundred thatched huts were strung along a single street.

We followed our host, Roberto, to a coco-nut grove, where he filled a large wooden trough with water from a near-by well. This was his bathroom. He presented us with some hard native soap and retired, leaving us to the privacy of our bath. The native soap was black, hard, and full of grit, but it made a good lather. After thoroughly removing the successive layers of mud, we dressed ourselves in our white shore clothes, stuffed our dirty native costumes into the clothes bag, and started back towards the hut.

When we again presented ourselves to the natives, we noticed a decidad change in their manner. Where before they had chatted away with easy informality, now they became reserved and excessively polite. They no longer addressed us in the familiar language, but used the formal pronouns reserved for strangers. They offered us food and drink with the greatest courtesy. Their house was ours, they said. But we were not fooled. With our European clothes we had become gringos—strangers. We did our best to bridge the awkward, constrained silences. Ginger

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looked at me, as though to say, "Something must be done about this."

Then she had an inspiration. "We are very sorry that we have to wear these clothes in your village," she smiled. "We only wear them in the ports and large cities, for they are not comfortable, and we prefer our native clothes. But now those are dirty, and we have only these."

I followed through with the story of our sorry appearance in Salina Cruz, and how everyone laughed at my white pants with blue flowers. This helped a bit, but it took more than a good story to make them forget that we were gringos.

While we were talking a crowd of natives gathered outside Roberto's hut, where they kept their distance, and just stared. Ginger stood it as long as she could. Finally she said, "Come on, let's put on our native clothes; dirty or not, it will be better than this."

Excusing ourselves, we beat a retreat to the coconut grove, where we pounded as much of the dirt off our mud-encrusted blue jeans as we could before putting them on. Ginger began carefully packing away our good clothes. "This will be the last time," she said grimly, "we'll wear these clothes in Mexico." I laughed. She was fairly safe in her pronouncement, since our next port of call of any size would be Champerico, Guatemala.

Although our hosts were appreciative of our efforts to please them by wearing native clothes, they were still quite conscious that they were entertaining gringos. It was not until we were out in the street on our way to the Presidencia, where we laughed and talked with natives who had not seen us dressed in our finerty, that we became at ease again.

The Presidente's official signature affixed to our documents, we strolled back up the long street towards Roberto's house, where we had promised to return for dinner. On the way we stopped in at a Chinese store—the only store in the village—to do a little trading. Its proprietor said business was bad,

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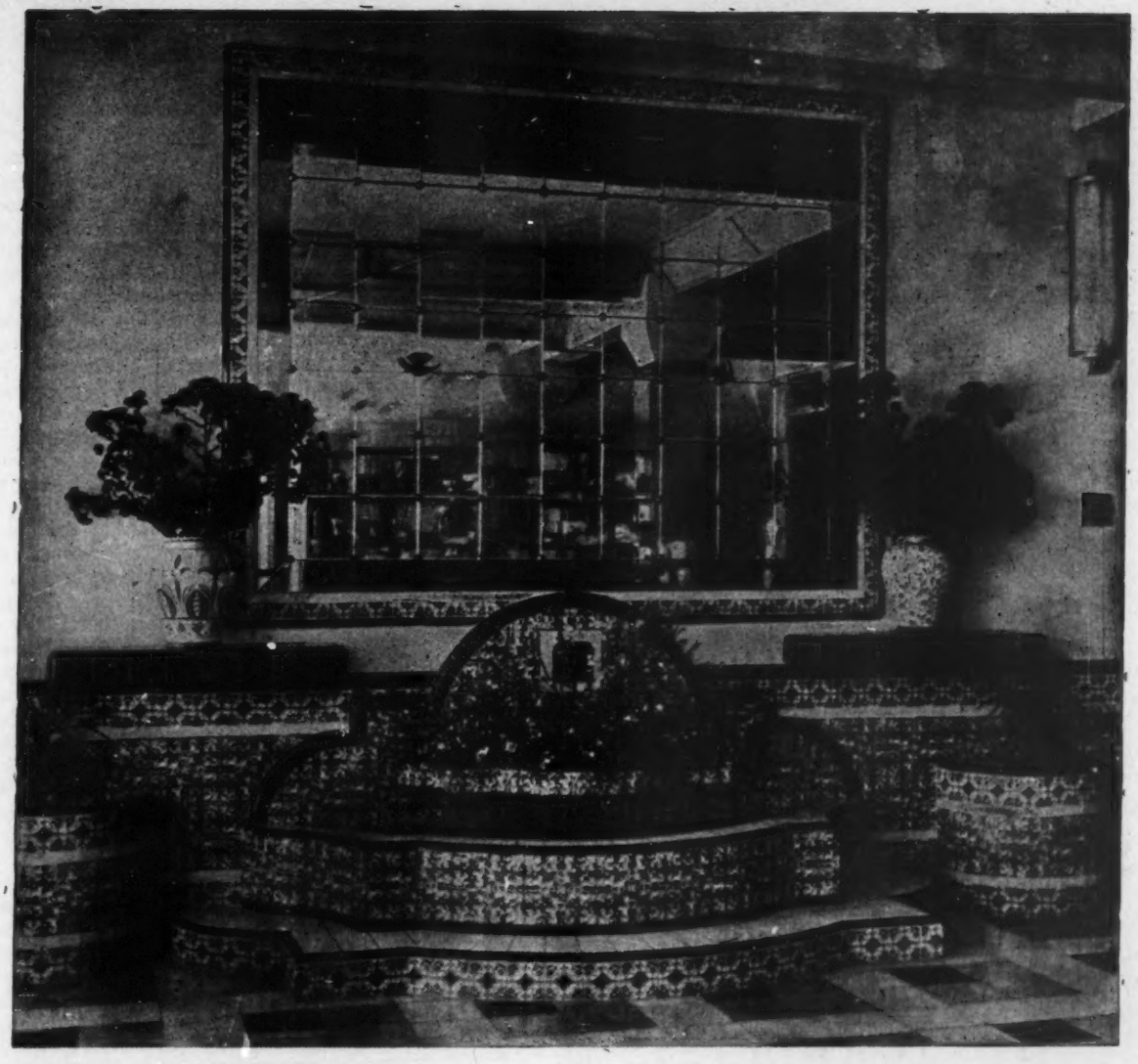
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because people in this town seldom bought manufactured articles. Everything was much cheaper than in Matias Romero and Salina Cruz, where we had purchased our last supplies. Panela, native sugar, was one cent a pound (American money) as against three cents a pound on the Isthmus. After a little dickering, we traded eight fishhooks and ten .22 shells for twenty pounds of panela, a dozen large onions, a pound of lard, and some cacao beans.

After dinner, we presented Roberto and his mother with fishhooks and needles, thanked them for their hospitality, and returned to the canoe. We declined invitations to stay over for a day or two, for we were anxious to reach an uninhabited section of the lagoon, where we could celebrate Christmas in our own manner.

The usual quest for information had been unproductive in Santa Rosa. No one knew anything about the country ahead beyond the fact that past the next village, called Punta Duro, four miles south, the lagoons were closed. We started off for Punta Duro. The country between the two villages was dotted with coco-nut groves and banana plantations. The water was full of fish and shrimps. Everywhere there was an abundance unknown to such villages as San Francisco del Mar.

When we pulled in at the little embarcadero of Punta Duro, the Presidente was there to meet us. The village, smaller than Santa Rosa, was charming. The thatched huts, each with its own well, were set among groves of coco palms and spreading shade trees. It was late in the afternoon, and the villagers, dressed in spotless white homespun and fresh from the siesta hour, strolled along the little street, or in their gardens. Not since leaving Tehuantepec had we seen so many flowers. Each hut was surrounded with brilliant tropical shrubs and flowering vines. Hibiscus, bougainvillaea, cresta de gallo, and many others grew in profusion.

Machineless men, dwelling outside the currents of time and change, the faces of the villagers of Pun-



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ta Duro reflected the peace and contentment that came from being presented with no problem beyond their capacity to solve. Close to the earth, they drew their sustenance from it without question. They needed no philosophers to prove to them that this was the best of all possible worlds. They knew it. They smiled and nodded as we passed, and called out greetings in their soft, unhurried voices.

In Punta Duro we consulted the usual authorities about the country to the south. There were no roads or trails, and the lagoons were closed, they said. One old man vouchsafed the information that many miles down the lagoon there was a village called La Barra. This sounded as though it were located on some bar, or sea entrance; and so I asked him how big the village was. "Oh," he said, "it is no longer there. Once it was a large pueblo, but everyone died of malaria."

Well used to such contradictory statements by now, I patiently kept on asking questions. A village called Oeos was next suggested. This, I knew, was two hundred miles to the south, on the border between Mexico and Guatemala. Nothing of further interest could be obtained beyond one suggestion: several miles past this village, at the end of the estero, lived a man who made his living hunting alligators. He was an authority on the lagoon country, and perhaps he might be able to help us. Encouraged by this prospect, we said good-bye and started off in search of him.

As we paddled down the narrow channel in the dusk, the children ran along the bank shouting "Adios, que la vaya bien." When we could no longer see them, their voices drifted down to us in the still twilight, a long drawn out, faint "adio-os." Night caught us two miles down the estero. Since it was too dark to navigate among the mangrove roots, we tied the canoe to a limb and turned in.

We awoke at daylight in a hazy, misty world from which all sense of direction had fled. The la-



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goon at this point was only ten feet wide. The night before I had tied the canoe to an overhanging limb in the centre of the waterway, and now could not remember which way the bow had pointed. Sunrise would be no help, since we frequently paddled north to go south in these labyrinthine channels. The current had turned the canoe round several times and the line was kinked and twisted. In an effort to determine the direction, I studied the current. Small twigs floated by. As frequently happens, the study of one problem solves another. "Look," I called to Ginger, "see these twigs; they're moving too rapidly for this to be a closed channel. Somewhere, not far off, the tide is coming in. It's not likely to be as far south as Sacapulco Bar."

We started down the crooked channel that wound through a big mangrove swamp, paddling against the current. At ten o'clock we arrived at the little ranchito of the alligator hunter. He was not at home, but his fat old wife and his three young daughters were. They were so astonished at the sight of two gringos in this isolated country, that at first they were speechless. The old lady hurried off to prepare a warm meal for us when she found out that we had not had one since leaving Punta Duro. Then her husband arrived. He was a fine-looking, elderly man, who claimed to know every channel in the vast lagoon country.

Twenty-five years ago, he said, there was a passage leading all the way to the Ocos River in Guatemala. Since then the mangroves had blocked the channel. Mud and silt had collected round their roots, and as soon as they cut off the current, other trees took root. Not only were the channels blocked by the mangrove roots, but during the wind storms, trees had also blown across them. He had made many attempts, he said, to get through to hunt, but without success. There were no roads, for no one ever went

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into the country to the south. The estero that we had paddled down wound in a great circle towards the ocean, where it joined many other channels. Where they met, there was a bar opening out into the ocean. This was our only route, for all the lagoons were closed a few miles south of his house. There was one little difficulty, he added, in attempting to reach the mar viva—the breakers at the mouth of the channel were too high to get through.

We thanked him and took our leave, sailing on down the little waterway towards the coast. Three miles brought us to a fairly large estero running north and south. Towards the west, we could hear the boom of heavy surf.

We stopped and took counsel. The country to the south sounded interesting. It might be impassable, and then again, it might be penetrated with effort. We had learned to discount stories as to whether country could be travelled or not. So little was really known about these great areas that it seemed worth the effort to find out more. This sea entrance to the lagoons that we had discovered was unmapped. No entrance from the ocean was charted nearer than Sacapulco Bar, sixty miles due south. There was always the alternative: if we couldn't whack our way through the cerrado (closed lagoon) we could return and try the bar. Ginger made the decision. "Let's head south," she said. "If we don't like it we can turn back. There's six hours of daylight left. Let's see how far we can get before dark."

The estero ran due south for four miles, where it became so narrow that we touched the trees on both sides as we passed. It finally ended in a small pampa from which there seemed to be no outlet. A second careful skirting of the trees revealed a slight current coming out from beneath the trees opposite the channel. Such as it was, this was the passage.

We turned the canoe round and backed it into the mangroves. Ginger placed herself on the bow so that she could propel the canoe by pulling on the mangroves, while I knelt on the stern to clear a passage by


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slashing the growth with the machete. Within a few feet of the little pampa, we were in a different world.

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"It's a question," I said, "whether we want to tackle this thing or not. If we don't want to, then we'd better go back to the bar, make our Christmas camp there, and after that go down to Champerico along the coast. I don't know where we'll find a place to build a camp in this swamp."

Ginger laughed. "We could build a tree house somewhere, and play Swiss Family Robinson."

"Are you trying to say that you want to go in?" I asked.

She said she was willing to try it if I was. That settled the matter. How, or when, we'd get out of the cerrado neither one of us knew. I started slashing at the mangroves.



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